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LIFE

OF

THOMAS CARLYLE

THOMAS CARLYLE

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MEMOIRS OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS CARLYLE

WITH PERSONAL REMINISCENCES AND SELECTIONS FROM HIS PRIVATE LETTERS TO NUMEROUS CORRESPONDENTS

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MEMOIRS OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS CARLYLE

WITH PERSONAL REMINISCENCES AND SELECTIONS FROM HIS PRIVATE LETTERS TO NUMEROUS CORRESPONDENTS

EDITED BY

RICHARD HERNE SHEPHERD

ASSISTED BY

CHARLES N. WILLIAMSON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.
1847–1881

LONDON
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1881

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THE LIFE

OF

THOMAS CARLYLE.

CHAPTER I.

LEIGH HUNT.—EMERSON.—MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE.—CHARLES BULLER.

Leigh Hunt's pension.

In the year 1847 Carlyle, with the characteristic kindness and loyalty to friendship which always distinguished him, wielded his powerful pen, and used his utmost interest with the great, to obtain a pension for his old acquaintance and former neighbour, the gifted and amiable Leigh Hunt, who, now in the evening of his life, after bravely bearing the burden and heat of the day, found himself without the comforts and alleviations that usually sweeten its close. It is pleasant to learn that the generous exertions of his friends were crowned with a successful issue; and that in the same year Sir Robert Peel was induced to confer a pension of £200 a year on the veteran journalist and poet.

The document drawn up by Carlyle on the occasion was as follows :—

"*Memoranda concerning Mr. Leigh Hunt.*

"1. That Mr. Hunt is a man of the most indisputedly superior worth; a *Man of Genius* in a very strict sense of that word, and in all the senses which it bears or implies; of brilliant varied gifts, of graceful fertility, of clearness, lovingness, truthfulness; of childlike open character; also of most pure and even exemplary private deportment; a man who can be other than *loved* only by those who have not seen him, or seen him from a distance through a false medium.

Carlyle on Leigh Hunt.

"2. That, well seen into, he *has* done much for the world;—as every man possessed of such qualities, and freely speaking them forth in the abundance of his heart for thirty years long, must needs do: *how* much, they that could judge best would perhaps estimate highest.

"3. That, for one thing, his services in the cause of Reform, as founder and long as editor of the *Examiner* newspaper; as poet, essayist, public teacher in all ways open to him, are great and evident: few now living in this kingdom, perhaps, could boast of greater.

"4. That his sufferings in that same cause

have also been great; legal prosecution and penalty (not dishonourable to him; nay, honourable, were the whole truth known, as it will one day be): unlegal obloquy and calumny through the Tory press;—perhaps a greater quantity of baseless, persevering, implacable calumny, than any other living writer has undergone. Which long course of hostility (nearly the cruellest conceivable, had it not been carried on in half, or almost total misconception) may be regarded as the beginning of his other worst distresses, and a main cause of them, down to this day.

"5. That he is heavily laden with domestic burdens, more heavily than most men, and his economical resources are gone from him. For the last twelve years he has toiled continually, with passionate diligence, with the cheerfullest spirit; refusing no task; yet hardly able with all this to provide for the day that was passing over him; and now, after some two years of incessant effort in a new enterprise that seemed of good promise, it also has suddenly broken down, and he remains in ill health, age creeping on him, without employment, means, or outlook, in a situation of the painfullest sort. Neither do his distresses, nor did they at any time, arise from wastefulness, or the like, on his own

part (he is a man of humble wishes, and can live with dignity on little); but from crosses of what is called Fortune, from injustice of other men, from inexperience of his own, and a guileless trustfulness of nature:—the thing and things that have made him unsuccessful make him in reality *more* loveable, and plead for him in the minds of the candid.

"6. That such a man is rare in a nation, and of high value there; not to be *procured* for a whole nation's revenue, or recovered when taken from us, and some £200 a year is the price which this one, whom we now have, is valued at; with that sum he were lifted above his perplexities, perhaps saved from nameless wretchedness! It is believed that in hardly any other way could £200 abolish as much suffering, create as much benefit, to one man, and through him to many and all.

"Were these things set fitly before an English minister, in whom great part of England recognises (with surprise at such a novelty) a man of insight, fidelity and decision, is it not probable or possible that he, though from a quite opposite point of view, might see them in somewhat of a similar light; and, so seeing, determine to do in consequence? *Ut fiat!*

"T. C."

Visit from Dr. Chalmers.

In May 1847 Carlyle received a visit at Cheyne Row from his famous fellow-countryman, Dr. Chalmers. There had been some slight acquaintance between them at Glasgow, when the former was as yet unknown to fame, in the days when Edward Irving was acting as Chalmers's assistant. Some polite and friendly correspondence (but amounting apparently to only one letter on each side) had passed between them, as we saw, in 1841. They were now to meet for the last time. In little more than a fortnight after the interview described by Chalmers in his Journal, and by Carlyle in his *Reminiscences*, the great Secessionist died suddenly during the night, at Edinburgh, immediately on his return there from his London visit (night of May 30–31, 1847), and was found dead in his bed in the morning.

Here is Chalmers's account of his visit to Cheyne Row:—

"Friday, May 14, 1847.—We took a cab to Carlyle's at Chelsea. Nothing could be warmer than Mrs. Carlyle's reception of me. She is remarkably juvenile-looking still. He came to us in a minute or two. I had lost all recollection of him, though he told me of three interviews, and having breakfasted with me at Glasgow. A strong-featured man, and of strong

sense. We were most cordial and coalescing, and he very complimentary and pleasant; but his talk was not at all Carlylish, much rather the plain and manly conversation of good ordinary common sense, with a deal of hearty laughing on both sides. The points on which I was most interested were his approval of my territorial system, and his eulogy on direct thinking, to the utter disparagement of those subjective philosophers who are constantly thinking upon thinking. We stopped more than an hour with him. Mr. Carlyle professed his willingness to write for the 'North British.'" *

Through the kindness of his surviving relatives we are enabled to present the reader with a series of some score or so of hitherto unpublished letters, addressed by Carlyle between the years 1847 and 1858 to the late Mr. John William Parker the younger, who, in addition to his arduous duties and responsibilities as junior partner in the extensive publishing business carried on by himself and his father, acted for many years as his own editor, when his firm became the proprietors and publishers of *Fraser's Magazine*. The following, written in

* *Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers, by Rev. Wm. Hanna*, vol. iv. (1852), p. 505.

the summer of 1847, is the first of the series. The others will appear in their proper chronological order.

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"July 2, 1847.

"DEAR SIR,

"Among the MSS. soliciting insertion in *Fraser's Magazine*, which have lately been handed over to you by Mr. Nickisson,* there is one which was forwarded by me on the part of an acquaintance, treating, if I remember right, on the character of *Shakespeare's Hamlet*. There is a label appended to it, containing the author's address; but I know not whether there was anything, other than verbal, of a message in my own name.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"If you have come to any decision as to that MS.; and could either let me know that it was to be inserted; or failing this, that you had returned it, with refusal, to its address (20 Circus, Bath),—I should feel my hands clear of the business, and be much obliged to you. The writer of the MS., a gentleman of some sense, and of much piety, sincerity, and other worth, is

* Successor to James Fraser, the originator and first publisher of *Fraser's Magazine*.—ED.

well known to me; but his paper, or any of his papers, I have not looked into.

"I remain,
"Yours sincerely,
"T. CARLYLE.

"J. W. Parker, Esq."

To a Mr. W. C. Bennett was addressed, in the same month, one of Carlyle's good-humouredly contemptuous protests against the writing of verse, which, as we already saw, were most frequently directed, discriminatingly and deservedly enough, against the writing of doggerel tolerable neither to gods, nor men, nor columns.

"Chelsea, July 14, 1847.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have received your letter and sonnet, certainly a strong proof of your kind feelings to me, which deserves my thanks. For the rest, I fear you have gone much into the common tendency of poets, that of exaggerating, that of dressing up a small reality in the beauties of imagination—a tendency which has its worth, and also has its dangers, nay, its worthlessness. In any case, I thank you heartily for your goodwill, which I will keep as one of my possessions, so long as

To W. C. Bennett.

possible; and surely, if I have done you any good at all, it is a real satisfaction to me. May the proof of it appear, with more and more clearness, in the life another brave man leads, while the years are his!—that is the best I can wish you.

"Your name hitherto is known to me chiefly as associated with verse. It is one of my constant regrets, in this generation, that men to whom the gods have given a genius (which means a light of intelligence, of courage, and all manfulness, or else means nothing) will insist, in such an earnest time as ours has grown, in bringing out their divine gift in the shape of *verse*, which now no man reads entirely in earnest. That a man has to bring out his gift in *words* of any kind, and not in silent divine *actions*, which alone are fit to express it well, seems to me a great misfortune for him; but that he should select verse with its half credibilities and other sad accompaniments, when he might have prose and be wholly credible, if he desired it,—this I lay at the door of our spiritual teachers (*pedants* mostly, and speaking an *obsolete* dialect), who thereby incalculably rob the world; making him who might have been a soldier and fighter (so terribly *wanted* just at present), a mere preacher and idle singer! This is a fixed perception of

mine, growing ever more fixed these many years; and I offer it to you, as I have done to many others in the like case, not much hoping that you will believe in it all at once. But, certainly, a good, wise, earnest piece in prose from you would please me better than the musicallest verses could.

"Wishing you heartily well, whether in verse or in prose,

"I remain, with many thanks,
"Sincerely yours,
"T. CARLYLE."

The sonnet for which Carlyle thus returned thanks, ran as follows :—

SONNET.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

Shout—Earth hath one more teacher—loftiest thought
Once more 'mongst men high utterance hath found;
Joy—let the vaulted heavens your joy resound,
Oh listening nations! Lo, the years have brought
One who from Wisdom's grasp the torch hath caught
To light you onwards:—shout,—Time's dark profound
Guideless man treads no more: oh, therefore, sound
To Heaven your praise that gives the aid ye sought.
Requirest thou for what thou, soul, art here?
Lo! the reply no longer mystery keeps;—
Life, at the last thy duty lieth clear,
Mirror'd to Heaven in his great thoughts' still deeps;

The thing thy conscience asks, let thy life give,
So not to time alone, soul, dost thou live.

W. C. Bennett,

Osborne Place, Blackheath.

It may readily be conceded that if all modern verse were of this calibre, its speedy abolition and extinction might not only be regarded with composure and even complacency; but would be "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

In August of this year Carlyle was on a visit to Matlock in Derbyshire, from which place he writes the following letter of encouragement and recognition to an unknown correspondent and disciple at Kirkcaldy, the scene of his early schoolmastering, of his first friendship with Edward Irving, and of many tender and solemn memories of the past.

"Matlock Bath,
"August 11, 1847.

"Dear Sir,

"I received your letter before leaving Chelsea, and write you here a hasty word of acknowledgment for it. The sympathy of a sincere man, of which sort I have reason to believe my present correspondent, is always valuable to a man; and the more so in my case, as for most

To Mr. James Wotherspoon.

part, the proffered 'sympathy' which comes to the like of me, from distant quarters, is too closely discernible as *false*, and a mere pruriency from the skin outward; not valuable, but distressing to a man!

"Continue to live and work, like a silent lover of Wisdom, manfully, and *modestly*, and valiantly, by the roar of your beautiful blue sea (which I once knew well, and still love);—and continue your relation with me, which is a genuine one, so long as you can.

"With many very kind wishes, I subscribe myself

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

The Squire Letters.

The three following letters to Mr. Parker have reference to the "Squire Papers," which form one of the Appendices in the later editions of *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, and which, under the title of "Thirty-five Unpublished Letters of Oliver Cromwell, communicated by Thomas Carlyle," appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* for December 1847.* The allusions will for the most part explain themselves to any reader who will take the trouble to refer to the original number

* No. 216, vol. xxxvi. pp. 681-654.

containing the paper. The letters exhibit curious evidence of Carlyle's painstaking care in minute matters.

"Chelsea, November 1, 1847.

"DEAR SIR,

"Here, after an immense and unexpected contest with the ruggedness of my materials, is the batch of Cromwell Letters;—worked into a kind of *Article*, readable beyond hope.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

Pray let me have a proof as soon as possible, while my hand is still in.—I believe the thing will have to be printed *in single column* (right athwart the page; not in two columns): ragged as the MS. looks, I have taken great pains to make it intelligible to the printer; and I think, if you will show him the *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, and let him make himself master of the plan of that, he will have no great difficulty here. But *three* kinds of writing are to be distinguished by him some way or other; nay four: mine, my correspondent's, Oliver Cromwell's, and Cornet Squire's; rather an intricate job!

"Yours truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"Better send the Proof in *slips*."

"Chelsea, November 15, 1847.

"DEAR SIR,

"Here are the proofs very carefully corrected: I have directed a *Revise* to be sent,—and *two* copies of it, having to retain one here for another purpose. Pray see that the printer sends *two*.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"You have managed extremely well, I think, with such typographic resources. I have put it down as a *query*, whether the black lines between the separate *individual letters* could not be dispensed with, and some space saved,—part of which might go to increase the space between the *batches of letters*? My own notion is in the affirmative. Do you decide it. Some space also, with advantage on all sides, will be saved among the *Scraps*.

"I did not get the *Copy* back; and there is one word in Letter No. 16 which I must request *you* to correct, or to send me that leaf of the MS.,—since otherwise it will cost me great trouble. One or two other words I have satisfactorily corrected by guess. In the *Letters*, we ought to be very correct indeed.

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

"Chelsea, Nov. 19, 1847.

"DEAR SIR,

"This thing is now tolerably correct; all but the *Scraps*, which are a good deal worse than before, and indeed nearly unintelligible as they stand at present. Will you do me the favour to take charge of them, for I have no doubt *you* perfectly understand what is to be done, and can guide the printer to what is wanted. Of course, if there is any *doubt*, I can look at that part of the proof again; but I believe there will be no doubt.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"Will you farther be so kind as charge the printer to send me four copies of the article (*perfect-copies*, I think printers call them) so soon as he has put it to press;—and *by no means to forget*, as I have known him do in the like case!

"In haste,

"Yours very truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

The following brief note has a double interest, as throwing light upon the rate of magazine payment to distinguished contributors at the period; and as containing an incidental allusion to Archdeacon Hare's forthcoming edition of John Sterling's *Essays and Tales* and to the Life of Sterling prefixed to it:—

"Chelsea, Dec. 9, 1847.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have just received your cheque for the article on Cromwell (£17 12s. 6d.); and beg to return many thanks for this and all your other polite dealings with me in that matter.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"I am very glad poor Sterling's book is to come out at last: the *Life* is dreadfully long-winded, but will have a lively interest for many, independently of all literary qualities.

"Believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE.

"J. W. Parker, Esq."

Some foolish persons appear to have supposed Carlyle's account of the "Squire Papers" in the December number of *Fraser*, to be a hoax. They found a mouthpiece or spokesman in a certain Mr. Edw. T. Blakely, who addressed a letter to Carlyle, dated "Thorpe Hamlet, near Norwich, Dec. 30, 1847," in which the writer says he "was much delighted to find a long article in *Fraser* for December, containing a number of Cromwell's letters, said to have been communicated to you in a very romantic manner, and the whole

The Squire Papers.

account bearing your signature. Since reading that article, to which I myself gave implicit credence, I have heard the matter frequently discussed, and even pronounced to be a clever joke of the Editor's. This has induced me," &c.

This silly inquiry elicited the following characteristic rejoinder from Carlyle.

"Chelsea, 1st January 1848.

"SIR,

"I am sorry any person whatever should fancy I would put my name, publicly or privately, to a fiction, and, giving it out as a fact, call the operation a good 'joke.'

To Mr. Edw. T. Blakely.

"Your first impression, which I think is more honourable to your sense of veracity, was the correct one, and will have to become the universal and final one. The thing I printed and put my name to, is *true*; deliberately set forth as my record of a fact, and meant to be accepted by all the world as such.

"I remain,

"Yours very truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

The following letter, addressed to Mr. J. W. Parker, refers to Archdeacon Hare's Life and Remains of Sterling, newly published, or on the

eve of publication. Mention is made of Emerson, then on his second visit to England, on a lecturing engagement, as recorded at large in his book entitled *English Traits*. Further allusion is also made to the *Squire Papers* and to the rather silly controversy which (as we saw by the reply to Mr. Blakely, just quoted) they had raised and were raising.

"Chelsea, Jan. 25th, 1848.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been in the country; I only returned yesterday. The *Sterling* book had arrived here, and been sent on its travels after me, from which I hope soon to recover it; the *Kingsley* one has not yet come to hand, but of course is coming: many thanks to you for both.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"Captain Sterling, I hear, is much disappointed that the Archdeacon has not sent him a copy, which doubtless is some oversight merely: if I might farther suggest, I think it would be handsome and proper to send Emerson the American an Editor's or Publisher's copy; he is here just now (address, '2, Fenny Street, Higher Broughton, Manchester'), and was a valued friend and correspondent of the deceased.

"*Fraser's Magazine* would of course be the

natural vehicle, if I had anything farther to say on those Squire Letters: but I have not; indeed I consider the whole controversy as one of the idlest and foolishest that has agitated the long ears of the public for a great while past;—and for my own part, do not care a pin's value how the asinine intellect may decide it for itself.

"Believe me, dear Sir,
"Yours with many thanks,
"T. CARLYLE."

Emerson on Carlyle.

While staying at Manchester (as mentioned in the above letter) Emerson told January Searle "that he had just visited Carlyle—who had grown so fierce and savage that he should be afraid of trusting some of his more gentle and spiritually-minded friends in his presence. His denunciations of high and sacred things are so terrible, he said, that they could not fail to do harm to any young, unbalanced persons who did not know from what deep sincere depths all that denunciation sprung. Carlyle, he said, had grown impatient of opposition, especially when talking of Cromwell. 'I differed from him,' added Emerson, 'in his estimate of Cromwell's character, and he rose like a great Norse giant from his chair—and, drawing a line with his

finger across the table, said, with terrible fierceness: "Then, Sir, there is a line of separation between you and me as wide as that, and as deep as the *pit.*"' Emerson was sorry for all this; for he loved Carlyle's genius, and genuine manly nature. He told us also that he had long been in correspondence with Carlyle, and that he had some letters from him which would prove of the very highest importance hereafter."*

For some impressions of Carlyle by Mr. Emerson, collected from letters home in 1848, the reader is referred to a recent number of *Scribner's Monthly Magazine.*†

Papers on Irish Affairs.

In March, April, and May of this year (1848) Carlyle contributed to the *Examiner* and *Spectator* a series of political articles on French and Irish Affairs. The first of these, on the fall of Louis Philippe, appeared in *The Examiner* of March 4. In the same journal for April 29 appeared an article entitled "Repeal of the Union," followed by three articles on May 13 (one in the *Examiner* and two in the *Spectator*), headed "Legislation for Ireland," "Ireland and the British Chief Governor," and "Irish Regiments (of the New

* *Emerson: his Life and Writings. By January Searle.* London, Holyoake & Co., 1855, p. 47.

† May 1881 (vol. xxii. pp. 89-91).

Era)." With one exception, to be mentioned presently (and that also on Irish affairs), these are all we have been able to trace of his fugitive political contributions to journalism. It was from his own lips that the present writer first heard of their existence, and Carlyle added the very interesting information that they were 'reprinted by Childs of Bungay as halfpenny pamphlets for distribution;' though we have never yet met with them in that form. While the Library Edition of his Works was passing through the press, the present writer, who then enjoyed the privilege of frequent personal intercourse and of occasional correspondence with Carlyle, ventured to suggest to him their possible inclusion as further "Precursors" (like the *Discourse on the Nigger Question*), or as Appendices, to the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*—a recommendation which he was apparently unable to entertain, but to which he vouchsafed the following not ungracious reply:—

Halfpenny Tracts.

" Chelsea, 15th March 1869.

" DEAR SIR,

" I am obliged and gratified by your loyal alacrity to help; but really quite ashamed at the amount of useless trouble you have had in copying these newspaper things! They are *not* introducible

Carlyle to R. H. S.

where you suggest; and I believe they are but a fraction (*proper* fraction perhaps) of the large mass which lies safe in the whale's belly still! However, I will keep these *in retentu*, with thankful memory of you.

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE.

"R. H. Shepherd, Esq."

These five articles, together with a sixth, "From Mr. Bramble's Unpublished *Arboretum Hibernicum*," contributed to *The Nation* newspaper in December 1849, shortly after Carlyle's visit to Ireland, with Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy, in the autumn of that year, are now reprinted in an Appendix at the end of the present volume.

In the month of June mention is again made of Emerson in a letter addressed to Mr. Reynell, of Little Pulteney-street, the printer of the *Examiner*.

"Chelsea, 8th June 1848.

"DEAR SIR,

"The bearer of this is Mr. Espinasse, a friend of mine, and known also to Mr. Forster,—who, I am very sure, had he been with you, would have warmly seconded the errand that now brings Mr. Espinasse.

"He comes, namely, with a paragraph about Mr. Emerson's Lectures, for next *Examiner*; and

I much wish you would put him in communication with the proper party for that object. In Mr. Forster's absence, I think I can safely recommend this, as right for every one; and certainly I do myself much desire it.

"Believe me always,
"Yours very sincerely,
"T. CARLYLE."

A paragraph or letter, presumably the same as that here referred to, appeared in the *Examiner* of June 17 following.

In the following month Carlyle addressed an important letter on primary education to Mr. H. R. Forrest, Secretary of the Lancashire Public School Association. It is dated "Chelsea, 28th July 1848." We can only afford space for the following extract:—

To Mr. H. R. Forrest.

"Surely, in all times, in all places where men are, it is the sacred, indefeasible duty, imposed by Heaven itself and the oldest laws of Nature, that they who have knowledge shall seek honestly to impart it to those who have not! No man, no generation of men, has a right to pass through this world, and leave their successors in a state of ignorance which could have been avoided. No generation: and if many generations among

us English have already too much done so, it is the sadder case for England now, and the more pressing is the call for this generation of Englishmen. In all times and places it is man's solemn *duty*, whether done or not;—and if in any time or place, I should say it was in Lancashire, in England, in these years that are now passing over us! Years swiftly rolling, laden with rapid events, overturns, and frightful catastrophes,—admonishing all men that human darkness issues finally in human ruin; that want of wisdom does at last mean want of power to exist on this earth, where, as it has been said, 'If you will not have illumination from above, you shall have conflagration from below, and whoever refuses *light* will get it in the form of *lightning* one day!'

"True, the mere schoolmaster is a small element of such 'illumination'; but we are never to forget that he is the first element, the indispensable preliminary of all others. Let us have the schoolmaster; we shall then be the readier to try for something more. No truth that he or another can teach us but is supported and confirmed by *all* truths. To nothing but error is or can any truth be dangerous."*

* The entire text of this letter may be found in the *Manchester Guardian* of August 9, 1848.

The following is a letter of introduction to Mr. Parker, the publisher of *Fraser*. Mr. W. M'Call, the gentleman to whom it refers, afterwards became a valued contributor to the magazine, and in a letter to Mr. Parker, written in the following May, we find Carlyle extolling one of his *protegé's* articles (a paper on "Joseph de Maistre," which had appeared in the April number) :—

"M'Call's *De Maistre* was very well; sincere, penetrating, though harsh: you might do something useful with M'C. by a little faith, hope, charity, and prudence,—four excellent virtues!"

"Chelsea, August 5th, 1848.

"DEAR SIR,

"Mr. W. M'Call, whom perhaps you have otherwise heard of, has something on the anvil which he thinks may suit *Fraser's Magazine*. I do not know what the present piece of writing is, nor what others the author may have in his head with that view; but I am very anxious that whenever he may present himself with a sample of his produce, you would give him and it a patient, candid, and more than usually careful examination. Unless I mistake much, Mr. M'Call must have a decided power of writing too, were he

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

once put upon the way,—which indeed is not always an easy process for one like him. He is clearly a man of much worth; of many energies and talents, which ought to bear good fruit in the world one day. I hope to do perhaps a mutual service in bringing him to you, and putting good theory in contact with good practice in this manner.

"Believe me,
"Yours always truly,
"T. CARLYLE.

"J. W. Parker, Esq., Publisher,
"West Strand.
"By Mr. M'Call."

In September of this year Carlyle was on a visit at The Grange, near Alresford, the seat of Lord and Lady Ashburton. The "dear Ballantyne" addressed in the following letter, dated from that place, was Mr. Thomas Ballantyne, originally a weaver at Paisley. Having ardent literary tastes, he got on the press, edited a paper in Bolton, then became sub-editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, and in 1846 editor of the *Manchester Examiner*. It was in that year and the next that Espinasse became a literary contributor to the paper; and as he also knew Carlyle,

Thomas Ballantyne.

it came about that the latter mediated between him and Ballantyne in certain editorial difficulties that arose between them. Shortly after the following letter was written Ballantyne left Manchester, and became for a time editor of the *Liverpool Mercury*. Thence he migrated to London, assisted Mr. George Henry Lewes in the *Leader*, and published in 1855 (with Carlyle's sanction) a volume of passages selected from his writings,* of which an enlarged edition appeared in 1870, a short time before Ballantyne's death. "He was an ingenious, hard-working, and scheming man," writes one who knew him well, "with an inordinate opinion of his own abilities. He had fine literary tastes, and was a good sub-editor; but he was unfit to be an editor. The last fifteen years of his life were a perpetual struggle with debt, and a constant succession of schemes to make money." Francis Espinasse, "a Shakespeare-browed young man, with the physique of a Spaniard," was a writer on the *Manchester Examiner* staff between the years 1846 and

Francis Espinasse.

* *Passages Selected from the Writings of Thomas Carlyle. With a Biographical Memoir. By Thomas Ballantyne* London: Chapman and Hall, 1855, pp. xii. 351.

Second Edition. With Alterations and Additions. London: Chapman and Hall, 1870, pp. x. 381.

The Introductory Memoir, which is enlarged in this edition, occupies the first thirty-one pages of the volume.

1848. Later on he edited the *Edinburgh Courant*, before Hannay. He was a contributor to the long-defunct literary journal, *The Critic* (of which we shall hear further news later on),—his articles being signed "Lucian Paul." He published in 1866 the first volume of a Life of Voltaire (no second ever appeared); and more recently (1874-77) two volumes of *Memoirs of Lancashire Worthies*. After this necessary, though perhaps somewhat tedious preamble, here is Carlyle's letter, which the reader is now in a better position to understand:—

"The Grange, Alresford, Hants,
"26th September 1848.

"Dear Ballantyne,

"I know not what little tiff this is that has arisen between Espinasse and you; but I wish much it would handsomely blow over, and leave all of you soon in the simple state of as you were! Reflecting on the enclosed little note which reached me this morning, I decided that one of the usefullest things I could in the first place attempt in regard to it, would be to try if haply the matter could not be quashed, and people who are certainly good friends, and who are probably of real service to one another, be prevented from flying asunder on slight cause.

To Thomas Ballantyne.

"This controversy I know well enough to be perpetual and universal between editor and contributor; no law can settle it; the best wisdom can do no better than suppress it from time to time. On Espinasse's side I will counsel patience, everywhere needful in human affairs; on your side, I would say that though an Editor can never wholly abandon his right to superintend, which will mean an occasional right to alter, or at least to remonstrate and propose alterations, yet it is in general wise, when as in this case you have got a really conscientious, accurate and painstaking contributor, to be sparing in the exercise of the right, and to put up with various unessential things, rather than *forcibly* break in to amend them. You have perhaps but a faint idea how much it distresses and disheartens such a man as I describe; nay *lames* him in the practice of his art, and tends to put his 'conscience' especially into painful abeyance: 'What is the use of *me*?' his literary conscience says: 'better for us all that I went to sleep!' When a man *has* a literary conscience, —which I do believe is a very rare case,—this result is a most sad one to bring about; hurtful not to him only, as you may well perceive. In fact I think a serious sincere man *cannot* very well write if he have the perpetual fear of

correction before his eyes; and if I were the master of such a one, I should certainly endeavour to leave him (within very wide limits) his own director, and to let him feel that he was so, and responsible accordingly.

"Forgive me if I interfere unduly with your affairs. If the case be that you perceive, after due trial, that Espinasse is no longer worth his wages to the *Examiner*, then all is said, and I have not a word to object. But if it be not so, and this is but a transitory embarrassment of detail, then it will be a service to both parties if I can get it ended within the safe limits. Of the fact, how it may stand, I know nothing at all, and you alone can know.

"All help that I can give Espinasse in other courses of enterprise I have of course to promise him; but I will advise him first of all that a reconciliation with you, if any ground he feels feasible were offered, would seem to me by far the desirablest course. With kind regards to Ireland, to whom indeed as much as to you these remarks address themselves,—in great haste,

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"We have been here, with country friends,

near a month, and are not to be in Chelsea, I imagine, for some ten days yet."

On the day after the date of the above, the following letter was written in reply to an inquiry put before Mr. Carlyle by a young lady who had "given her mind much to the moral problems involved in the question of a future state."

"The Grange, Alresford,
"September 27, 1848.

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"The question that perplexes you is one that no man can answer. You may console yourself by reflecting that it is by its nature *insoluble* to human creatures—that perhaps what human creatures mainly have to do with such a question is to get it well put to rest, suppressed if not answered, that so their life and its duties may be attended to without impediment from it. Such questions in this our earthly existence are many.

'There are two things,' says the German philosopher, 'that strike me dumb; the starry firmament (*palpably* infinite) and the sense of right and wrong in man.' Whoever follows out that 'dumb' thought will come upon the origin of our conceptions of heaven and hell—of an infinitude of merited happiness, and an infinitude

of merited woe—and have much to reflect upon under an aspect considerably changed. Consequences good and evil, blessed and accursed, it is very clear, do follow from all our actions here below, and prolong, and propagate, and spread themselves into the Infinite, or beyond our calculation or conception; but whether the notion of *reward* and *penalty* be not, on the whole, rather a *human* one, transferred to that immense divine fact, has been doubtful to many. Add this consideration, which the best philosophy teaches us, 'that the very *consequences* (not to speak of the penalties at all) of *evil* actions die away and become abolished, long before eternity ends; that it is only the consequences of *good* actions that are *eternal*;—for these are in harmony with the laws of this universe, and add themselves to it, and cooperate with it for ever; while all that is in *disharmony* with it must necessarily be without continuance, and soon fall dead.' As perhaps you have heard in the sound of a Scottish psalm amid the mountains; the true notes alone support one another, all following the one true rule; the false notes, each following its different false rule, quickly destroy one another; and the psalm, which was discordant enough near at hand, is a perfect melody when heard from afar.

On the whole, I must account it but a morbid, weak imagination that shudders over this wondrous divine universe as a place of despair to any creature; and contrariwise, a most degraded human sense, sunk down to the region of the *brutal* (however common it be), that in any case remains blind to the *infinite* difference there ever is between right and wrong for a human creature —or God's law and the devil's law.

"Yours very truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

The following letter was addressed to his old friend and fellow-countryman, Thomas Aird, in acknowledgment of a volume of his collected poems:—

"Chelsea, 15th November 1848.

"MY DEAR AIRD,

"I have received your volume of poems—many thanks to you for so kind and worthy a gift, and for the kind and excellent letter which came to me the day after. I have already made considerable inroads into the 'Tragedy of Wold' and other pieces. I find everywhere a healthy breath as of mountain breezes; a native manliness, veracity, and geniality which, though the

To Thomas Aird.

poetic form, as you may know, is less acceptable to me in these sad times than the plain prose one, is for ever welcome in all 'forms,' and is, withal, so rare just now as to be doubly and trebly precious. But your delineations of reality and fact are so fresh, clear, and genuine when I have met you in that field, that I always grudge to see such a man employ himself in fiction and imagination—when the 'reality,' however real, has to suffer so many abatements before it can come to me. Reality, very ugly and ungainly often, is nevertheless, as I say always, *God's* unwritten poem, which it needs precisely that a human genius should *write* and make *intelligible* (for it would then be beautiful, divine, and have all high and highest qualities) to his less-gifted brothers! But what then? Gold is golden, howsoever you coin it; into what filigree soever you twist it. I know gold when I see it, one may hope. For the rest, 'a wilful man must have his way.' And, indeed, I know very well I am in a minority of one with this precious literary creed of mine, so cannot quarrel with your faith and practice in that respect. Long may you live to employ those fine gifts in the way your own conscience and best-deliberated insight suggests!

"Your new lodging, commanding a view of

Troqueer and the river, must be a welcome improvement on the former, which was of the street streetish: the very sound of the *Cauld** is a grateful song to one's heart—whispering of rusticities and actualities; singing a kind of lullaby to all follies and evil fantastic thoughts in one! You speak of my getting back to Scotland: such an imagination dwells always in the bottom of my heart; but, alas! I begin often to surmise that it is but perhaps imaginary after all; that I am grown a pilgrim and sojourner, and must continue such till I end it! That shall be as it pleases God.

"I get very ill on with all kinds and degrees of work in late days; in fact, the aspect of the world, from one end of it to the other, especially this last year, is hateful and dismal, not to say terrible and alarming, and the many miserable meanings of it strike me dumb. The 'general Bankruptcy of Humbug' I call it; Economics, Religions, alike declaring themselves to be *Mene, Mene*; all public arrangements among men falling as one huge *confessed* Imposture, into bottomless insolvency, Nature everywhere answering, 'No effects!' This is not a pleasant consummation; one knows not how to speak of this all

* Weir across the Nith.—Ed.

at once, even if it had a clear meaning for one! Good be with you, dear Aird. Tell my sister you have heard from me, and that she must write.

"Yours ever truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

Death of Charles Buller.

In the last days of November, Carlyle's old pupil and friend, Charles Buller, who had lately distinguished himself in the Parliamentary arena and elsewhere, and of whom the highest hopes were entertained in the future, died, suddenly and prematurely, in the forty-third year of his age. The brilliant career thus cut short formed the subject of an eloquent memorial notice from the pen of his former tutor, which appeared in *The Examiner* of 2nd December 1848:—

Carlyle on Charles Buller.

"A very beautiful soul has suddenly been summoned from among us; one of the clearest intellects and most aërial activities in England has unexpectedly been called away. Charles Buller died on Wednesday morning last; without previous sickness, reckoned of importance, till a day or two before. An event of unmixed sadness, which has created a just sorrow, private and public. The light of many a social circle is dimmer

henceforth, and will miss long a presence which was always gladdening and beneficent: in the coming storms of political trouble, which heap themselves more and more in ominous clouds on our horizon, one radiant element is to be wanting now.

"Mr. Buller was in his forty-third year, and had sat in Parliament some twenty of those. A man long kept under by the peculiarities of his endowment and position, but rising rapidly into importance of late years; beginning to reap the fruits of long patience, and to see an ever wider field open round him. He was what in party language is called a 'reformer,' from his earliest youth; and never swerved from that faith, nor could swerve. His luminous sincere intellect laid bare to him in all its abject incoherency the thing that was untrue; which thenceforth became for him a thing that was not tenable, that it was perilous and scandalous to attempt maintaining. Twenty years in the dreary weltering lake of parliamentary confusion, with its disappointments and bewilderments, had not quenched this tendency; in which, as we say, he persevered as by a law of Nature itself: for the essence of his mind was clearness, healthy purity, incompatibility with fraud in any of its forms. What he accomplished,

therefore, whether great or little, was all to be *added* to the sum of good; none of it to be deducted. There shone mildly in his whole conduct a beautiful veracity, as if it were unconscious of itself; a perfect spontaneous absence of all cant, hypocrisy, and hollow pretence, not in word and act only, but in thought and instinct. To a singular extent it can be said of him that he was a spontaneous clear man. Very gentle, too, though full of fire; simple, brave, graceful. What he did, and what he said, came from him as light from a luminous body, and had thus always in it a high and rare merit, which any of the more discerning could appreciate fully.

"To many, for a long while, Mr. Buller passed merely for a man of wit; and certainly his beautiful natural gaiety of character, which by no means meant *levity*, was commonly thought to mean it, and did for many years hinder the recognition of his intrinsic higher qualities. Slowly it began to be discovered that, under all this many-coloured radiancy and coruscation, there burnt a most steady light; a sound penetrating intellect, full of adroit resources, and loyal by nature itself to all that was methodic, manful, true;—in brief, a mildly resolute, chivalrous, and gallant character, capable of doing much serious service.

"A man of wit he indisputably was, whatever more, amongst the wittiest of men. His speech, and manner of being, played everywhere like soft brilliancy of lambent fire round the common objects of the hour; and was, beyond all others that English society could show, entitled to the name of excellent; for it was spontaneous, like all else in him, genuine, humane,—the glittering play of the soul of a real man. To hear him, the most serious of men might think within himself, 'How beautiful is human gaiety too!' Alone of wits, Buller never *made* wit; he could be silent, or grave enough, where better was going; often rather liked to be silent if permissible, and always was so where needful. His wit, moreover, was ever the ally of wisdom, not of folly, or unkindness, or injustice; no soul was ever hurt by it; never, we believe never, did his wit offend justly any man; and often have we seen his ready resource relieve one ready to be offended, and light up a pausing circle all into harmony again. In truth, it was beautiful to see such clear, almost childlike simplicity of heart co-existing with the finished dexterities, and long experiences, of a man of the world. Honour to human worth, in whatever form we find it! This man was true to his friends, true to his convictions,—and true without effort, as

the magnet is to the north. He was ever found on the right side; helpful to it, not obstructive of it, in all he attempted or performed.

"Weak health; a faculty indeed brilliant, clear, prompt, not deficient in depth either, or in any kind of active valour, but wanting the stern energy that could long endure to *continue* in the deep, in the chaotic, new, and painfully incondite,—this marked out for him his limits; which, perhaps with regrets enough, his natural veracity and practicality would lead him quietly to admit and stand by. He was not the man to grapple, in its dark and deadly dens, with the Lernæan coil of social Hydras; perhaps not under any circumstances: but he did, unassisted, what he could; faithfully himself did something, nay, something truly considerable;—and in his *patience* with the much that by him and his strength could not be done, let us grant there was something of beautiful too!

"Properly, indeed, his career as a public man was but beginning. In the office he last held, much was silently expected of him; he himself, too, recognised well what a fearful and immense question this of Pauperism is; with what ominous rapidity the demand for solution of it is pressing on; and how little the world generally is yet aware what methods and

principles, new, strange, and altogether contradictory to the shallow maxims and idle philosophies current at present, would be needed for dealing with it! This task he perhaps contemplated with apprehension;—but he is not now to be tried with this, or with any task more. He has fallen, at this point of the march, an honourable soldier; and has left us here, to fight along without him. Be his memory dear and honourable to us, as that of one so worthy ought. What in him was true and valiant endures for evermore—beyond all memory or record. His light airy brilliancy has suddenly become solemn, fixed in the earnest stillness of Eternity. *There* shall we also, and our little works, all shortly be."

In January 1849 Carlyle writes to Mr. Parker, introducing to his notice a translation of Jean Paul Richter's little story of *Selina*, by a young lady, a Miss Juliette Bauer (afterwards *Gowa*, by marriage). Her translation of the *Campaner Thal*, of which Carlyle speaks approvingly in the following letter, passed into a second edition in 1857. She afterwards abridged and translated the Lives of the Brothers Humboldt, from the German of Klencke and Schlesier; translated George Sand's Venetian story, *The Uscoque*; and

Jean Paul's *Campaner Thal.*

doubtless did other useful and agreeable work, of a kindred nature (were it of the least consequence to discover or trace such). Whether anything came of Carlyle's recommendation we are unable to say. The little story of *Selina* may possibly have appeared as "a small separate volume" (though we find no record of it); but it certainly never appeared in the Magazine.

"Chelsea, January 12th, 1849.

"DEAR SIR,

"I read, about a year ago, the *Campaner Thal* of Jean Paul F. Richter, translated by Miss Juliette Bauer, of which you now receive a copy from that young lady,—which, pray, look at, a little. Apart from a little indistinctness about the punctuation,—due probably to the printer,—I considered the translation really *good*: and that it was a work worth translating, calculated to interest all serious and ingenious persons, is a fact that needs no testimony of mine.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"The same young lady, it appears, has now prepared a translation of the little book called *Selina*, which is a kind of sequel and completion to the other. Of this also she sends you the MS., or at least a specimen of the MS. Whether you can do anything with it is quite uncertain to me; but I wish you to examine

and consider; and would not refuse this my faithful testimony on the subject, to induce you so to do.

"Jean Paul was never yet *popular* among English readers: but there is a small and increasing public to whom he irresistibly appeals; and that small, not entirely inconsiderable, and continually increasing public is is withal (the excellence of the man being indisputable) a quite *certain* one, in my opinion. Perhaps either for the Magazine, or, which would be pleasanter, for a small separate volume, you may be able to turn these papers to account? The young lady's style of work is as I describe it to you. Some judicious and speedy answer I can at least promise her from you.

"Believe me, always,
"Very sincerely yours,
"T. CARLYLE.

"J. W. Parker, Esq., Publisher,
"West Strand."

Carlyle's Examination before the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Constitution and Management of the British Museum, in the following February, was so remarkable an episode in his career that it had better be treated of in a separate Chapter.

CHAPTER II.

CARLYLE'S EVIDENCE BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE CONSTITUTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

As already seen, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* appeared in 1845. Though Carlyle described his part of this great work merely as "elucidations," there is no doubt that the preparation of it cost him more pains than any of his previous books; more even than *The French Revolution*, deep as was the study required to produce that masterpiece. But though the labour necessary to consult all the authorities on the subject of the French Revolution, to sift the evidence, and arrive at clear statements on the events of the period, and clear conceptions of

The French Revolution.

the characters of the chief actors in them, was very severe, there was, on the other hand, nothing recondite about the materials themselves. The French Revolution was, as John Sterling said, "transacted in the lives of our fathers," and the chief difficulty of writing a history of it lay in selecting from the too abundant material. With the history of Cromwell it was quite different. The books and pamphlets which had been written about the Protector were plentiful enough, but they were, as a rule, either grossly inaccurate, or marred by a spirit of bigoted partisanship. In the preparation of this great work on Cromwell we have another instance of the practical side of Carlyle's genius—the transcendent faculty for taking pains. In the eloquent introductory chapter he recounts in his own inimitable manner some of the difficulties with which he had to contend during the composition of the work. He writes as follows :—

Cromwell's Letters and Speeches.

"Few nobler Heroisms, at bottom perhaps no nobler Heroism, ever transacted itself on this Earth; and it lies as good as lost to us; overwhelmed under such an avalanche of Human Stupidities as no Heroism before ever did. Intrinsically and extrinsically it may be con-

sidered inaccessible to these generations. Intrinsically, the spiritual purport of it has become inconceivable, incredible to the modern mind. Extrinsically, the documents and records of it, scattered waste as a shoreless chaos, are not legible. They lie there, printed, written, to the extent of tons and square miles, as shot-rubbish; unedited, unsorted, not so much as indexed; full of every conceivable confusion;—yielding light to very few; yielding darkness, in several sorts, to very many. Dull Pedantry, conceited idle Dilettantism,—prurient Stupidity in what shape soever,—is darkness and not light! There are from Thirty to Fifty Thousand unread Pamphlets of the Civil War in the British Museum alone: huge piles of moulder-ing wreck, wherein, at the rate of perhaps one pennyweight per ton, lie things memorable. They lie preserved there, waiting happier days; under present conditions they cannot, except for idle purposes, for dilettante excerpts and such like, be got examined. The Rushworths, Whit-lockes, Nalsons, Thurloes; enormous folios, these and many others, they have been printed, and some of them again printed, but never yet edited,—edited as you edit wagon-loads of broken bricks and dry mortar, simply by tum-bling up the wagon! Not one of those

monstrous old volumes has so much as an available Index. It is the general rule of editing on this matter. If your editor correct the press, it is an honourable distinction to him."*

More lamentation follows in the same strain, concluding with an appeal to Dryasdust to leave his philosophic histories and compendiums, and exercise what talent he has on the arranging and cataloguing of such collections as these King's Pamphlets. During the time of preparation for the book on Cromwell, as also when studying for the French Revolution, Carlyle was a constant visitor at the Reading-Room of the British Museum; then, it need hardly be said, very different in point of accommodation to the present Reading-Room, built in 1857. It was probably because he was known to have used the Library a great deal, and to have tested its resources in many directions, that Carlyle was called as a witness before the Royal Commission appointed in 1849 to "inquire into the Constitution and Management of the British Museum." Carlyle's evidence, like that of the other witnesses, is preserved in a voluminous

* *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches: With Elucidations.* By Thomas Carlyle. Lond. 1845, vol. i. pp. 4-5.

Blue-Book issued in the following year, and it is extremely characteristic of the man, illustrating in practical affairs many of his ethical theories.

Commissioners present.

The Commissioners present on the day that Carlyle's evidence was taken (Thursday, 8th February 1849) were Lord Seymour, Viscount Canning, Lord Wrottesley, Sir Roderick Murchison, Mr. Hume, and Mr. Milnes, with the Earl of Ellesmere in the chair. Carlyle, while evidently striving throughout to give his evidence in official style, often broke through restraint, and harangued the Commission at considerable length. There is here and there a certain testiness visible on the part of some of the Commissioners at the unusual manner in which the witness replied to his questioners. He is first interrogated by the Chairman as to the opportunities he has had of testing the resources of the Library. These, the witness replies, have been many; as he has been in the habit of using the Reading-Room for a good many years for wide purposes of general literature. With regard to the conduct of the attendants and the condition of the Room, he makes this statement, which might substantially apply, for better and for worse, to the new domed Reading-Room, as it now is:—"The general conduct of the atten-

dants, I should say, according to all my experience, has been quite exemplary, worthy of all commendation, civil and prompt, and in every way proper. With regard to the room, there is not much to be said, I suppose, against anything in it; it has very bad ventilation; the atmosphere is very bad, and there is a very great quantity of noise, which I suppose is inseparable from the great number of people reading in it." Rather a sweeping accusation this concerning a room in regard to which "there is not much to be said against anything in it!" Tolerable ventilation is imperatively necessary in a room where study is to be carried on; and in this important respect the new Room is as deficient as the old one was. Speaking of the manner in which the want of space, the bad air, and the noise operated in his own case, Carlyle says:—"I should say that there is need of a great deal more space, if there is to be any opportunity of people really studying: in fact, the jostling you are subject to, and the continual want of composure, were entirely fatal to any attempt on my part to *study* there; and I should say that it was impossible for anyone who had any delicate subject of study to make any progress in it. And accordingly, for a long time, I have felt that it was useless for

me to go there with that view; and the only use I have made of the Library was to consult some particular books that had a bearing upon the subject I was studying, by turning up a page or two, and satisfying myself upon an inquiry which I had brought that length: but the inquiry itself it was not possible for me to prosecute there. . . . There is no unnecessary noise; but I have gone into that room when it has been quite crowded, and there has been no seat vacant, and I have been obliged to sit on the step of a ladder: and there are such a bustle and confusion that, I may state to the Commissioners, I never do enter the room without getting a headache—what I call the Museum headache—and therefore I avoid the room till the last extremity. I may add, that I am rather a thin-skinned sort of student, and sensible to these inconveniences more than perhaps most other students; but such has been the uniform fact for many years past, and accordingly I frequent the establishment as little as possible." That insidious "Museum headache" was probably the result as much of the bad air as of the noise; and attentive readers of the *Reminiscences* will recall, in connexion with this extreme sensitiveness to unpleasant surroundings, many a painful passage

The Museum headache.

having reference to hideous disturbances to sleep at night, discomfort and wretchedness owing to the presence of house-painters, disgust arising from tedious and dusty journeys. In *Sartor Resartus*, too, there are passages which give utterance to the pain caused by the jostling with rough and unsympathetic natures. Through life Carlyle retained this highly-strung nervous system. As we have seen, Miss Martineau speaks of him constructing a noise-proof room at the top of the house in Cheyne Row, and everyone has heard the anecdote of the painful pause of anticipation between each successive crow of a neighbour's cock.

Much of the time of the Commission was occupied in examining witnesses as to the best form of Catalogue for the British Museum Reading-Room. While disclaiming any practical acquaintance with the drawing up of catalogues, Carlyle had very decided opinions as to what an ideal catalogue should be, and he saw clearly how far the Catalogue then in existence fell short of the ideal. On this subject there is much repetition of question and reply; but the following lengthy rejoinder to a request to state "the nature of the inconvenience" attending the use of the then-existing Catalogue sufficiently explains

The Catalogue.

Carlyle's views on this matter:—"In the first place, there is no printed Catalogue of the Library at all to be had. There seems to be one copy only of the Catalogue, a great part of which is in manuscript, and it is extremely difficult to find any book in it. I should consider that it was necessary to have a printed catalogue that you might take home with you and consult at your leisure, and see what book you wished to have to study; and in so large a collection as this, I should consider that there ought to be Catalogues of specific subjects, which you could buy and take home with you. Out of the 300,000 volumes in this Library, works upon specific subjects should be, by intelligence and method, brought into groups; so that you might find out the particular works you had to consult. But at all events there should be *a* Catalogue, always at once accessible, which you might obtain and carry with you, and investigate with perfect freedom whenever you pleased. There ought to be a Catalogue of the Museum, drawn up with the best skill possible,—a General Catalogue; and there ought to be all manner of specific catalogues: and those catalogues ought to be circulated over Great Britain, so that a studious man might be able to ascertain what books he could get here

when he came to London. There is such a Catalogue of the Harleian manuscripts; a person buys that, and again and again he consults it, and he reads it over a dozen times, in order to see whether there is anything in it that will serve him. That Catalogue was drawn up by Wanley, the Earl of Oxford's librarian, a man who understood the business, and who seems to have taken great pains with it. The want of a printed Catalogue of the books in the British Museum Library is an immense evil: and it has been rendered considerably more so by the new regulation under which you are obliged to seek the book out of the Catalogue before the officer will at all stir to seek it for you. That I have often found extremely disagreeable. You go to your Catalogue; there are perhaps twenty or thirty or more volumes standing up in different rows, and a great number of people referring to them, and you cannot get hold of the volume that you want. The volumes are all arranged in their right order in the morning, but everybody throws the volume aside out of his hands when he has done with it, and without attending to the order of arrangement. If you go two or three hours after the Library is opened, it is difficult to discover your volume, and perhaps

somebody has got it, and you have a great deal of trouble in finding it:—and for what purpose I do not know, for it never answered any purpose with me, but to waste time and patience at the beginning of the business." This uncompromising objection to the whole system under which the Reading-Room was managed raised not a little opposition among the members of the Commission. Whereupon Carlyle was questioned and examined with a view to showing that such a Catalogue as he required was an impossibility. Had he made any calculation as to the probable size of a printed catalogue of all the books in the British Museum Library? Did he really think it feasible that such a volume could be carried home for consultation in private? With regard to the question of portability, there might certainly be a difficulty; but at any rate copies of the British Museum Catalogue should be distributed in all country libraries, that studious men in the provinces might know to what books access could be had in London. That, at any rate, he considered, would be a clear advantage. Then again, as regards catalogues of specific subjects. To that point he attached great importance, illustrating it from his own experience when engaged in writing *The*

French Revolution. "There is a large collection of books about the French Revolution, which I had to consult fifteen years ago. I was extremely anxious to find any list whatever of those books. A mere auctioneer's list of the names of the books would have been of prime service; but I found no such thing in the Library: and I found that without such a thing the books were entirely useless to me. I appealed to the keeper of the books in the Reading-Room: he said, 'Here were all the works in the General Catalogue, and that I had the same chance as others.' What chance others had, I could not say. I was not unacquainted with the subject; I had already read several hundred volumes on it. But from the General Catalogue, or other indications offered me in the British Museum, I had failed to discover that there was any specific collection of books on the French Revolution there at all: it was only by accident, and in another quarter, that I had heard of it; and now, without better aid than the General Catalogue, it was entirely inaccessible to me, of no use to me whatever. In fine, after attempting this uncatalogued collection in various ways, to no purpose,—after exercising all my own ingenuity, and experiencing, on the part of the

Books on the French Revolution.

attendants, a great desire to oblige me,—messages had to be sent, and at last, after some delay, the person who had charge of those books allowed me to go into the room. Here I found a great progress possible in the course of an hour or two. I was exceedingly desirous to go back into the room; but, for some reason or another, never could get admittance again; and finally I gave up the business of attempting it. People began to publish a book in Paris, consisting of extracts from a similar Collection there; and I gave up the Museum. For all practical purposes this Collection of ours might as well have been locked up in water-tight chests and sunk on the Dogger-bank, as put into the British Museum. That is my experience about it." With reference also to the King's Pamphlets, already alluded to, Carlyle has to complain that the Catalogue is not printed. His statement as to the value of these Pamphlets in connexion with the history of England is extremely interesting and significant:—"There is a most invaluable set of works upon that subject" (the History of England during the Commonwealth) "in the Museum; a great many of them were given by George III. They are called the King's Pam-

The King's Pamphlets.

phlets; and in value, I believe, the whole world could not parallel them. If you were to take all the collections of works on the Civil War, of which I have ever heard notice, I believe you would not get a set of works so valuable as those. I was extremely desirous to get all the benefit I could from them; and in spite of every obstacle, I succeeded in getting great benefit from them. There are 30,000 or 50,000 pamphlets; I am not certain, but I computed them at between 30,000 and 50,000." (*Chairman.*) "Do you think it would be possible to introduce a description of those 50,000 separate articles into a General Catalogue?"—"There is already a manuscript Catalogue of them; or they would be of no use. No one would have patience enough to look into them; for if you examine 100 volumes you perhaps find one only that serves your purpose; and you must exercise all your sagacity when you have a book, to find out where you can get any good out of it. But there is a catalogue of those pamphlets, prepared by the person who purchased them, or by somebody who followed him: it is written in an old hand, which one is not so well acquainted with. But it was the *sine quâ non* to any use whatever that I could make of these pamphlets. I hired a clerk to go there and read them; I

trained him to go and search out in these pamphlets answers to inquiries which I made." (*Mr. Milnes.*) "Has that special catalogue ever been printed?"—"No, it has not." (*Chairman.*) "Would it be of any great service if it were printed?"—"Yes, I should say it would; the catalogue is very well drawn up; it gives the titles of the pamphlets: there are perhaps 27 pamphlets in each volume, and there are above 1,000 number of volumes; they are marked volume so and so, and number so and so." "There must be 50,000 titles?"—"Yes, there is that number of pamphlets. But I consider them to be the most valuable set of documents connected with English history; greatly preferable to all the sheep-skins in the Tower, and other places, for informing the English what the English were in former times. I believe the whole secret of the seventeenth century is involved in that hideous mass of rubbish there, and that it would be well worth searching into; and that to get at the gold contained in those works, throwing that hideous mass of rubbish aside out of the way of men, would be one of the best achievements that a patron of English history could accomplish just now. Once or twice, on asking for certain of those pamphlets, I was told that they were at catalogue-making;

and I got an idea at the time that the people were tearing up these pamphlets and putting them into a new order, some fancied order, which would be fatal to their use:—this filled me with a kind of alarm and horror of which the Commissioners can form no idea. I have since discovered that this was not so; that it was some kind of legitimate inquiry the people were making, about the sequels of various other books placed in various parts of their general catalogue, and that they were not desirous to tear up those pamphlets, or to arrange them in some fancied superior order. However, I had such a feeling about it that I could get no rest upon the subject till I drew up a memorial to the Trustees; and that memorial was, I think, submitted to the Trustees of the Museum, elaborately stating what I thought ought to be done with that old catalogue of pamphlets on the Civil War. I recommended that it should be instantly sent to the printer to be printed, and that copies of it should be sold to anybody who desired to look into these matters. I could see no plan so ready as that to lead to spontaneous investigation (and I did not see any probability of getting those matters investigated, by authority, or public patronage, at present), to have that

Civil-War Pamphlets.

catalogue printed, and circulated about England, so that anyone who had the curiosity to investigate the history of England during the Civil War might get a copy of it. It might be sold at a guinea or ten shillings: and if a person purchasing a catalogue, saw in it the title of a pamphlet which attracted him, an attack upon a town that he knew, or if he saw anything else to attract his attention, he would come to the British Museum and consult that work; he would find in it anything that was interesting, his living mind would put that in a new shape, and bring it before the public:—and finally the whole mass of pamphlets would be sifted and sorted in that way, without any effort at all on the part of the establishment. It was found, however, that the project could not be carried out. I was told that it was contrary to the rules of the Library, and I think I heard that the catalogue was said not to be correct. I had found no error in it;—and I should say that the worst catalogue that was ever drawn up by the hand of man was greatly preferable to no catalogue at all. In fact, I believe a *perfect* catalogue was never yet, and never will be, made by any human being; but of all catalogues, surely by far the *worst* is 'no catalogue at all.' If you go

Need of a Catalogue.

into a mass of books, and have no catalogue of them, you are sent into a mere *Sylva Sylvarum*. You turn away with abhorrence; for you find that you can get nothing out of it. If you had the age of Methuselah to spend upon the thing, you could not get through such a trackless mass of confusion,—which any one, just in proportion to the order that there is in his own mind, holds in detestation, and flies away from." Questioned by Mr. Milnes as to whether he considered the accuracy of a catalogue as unimportant compared with the necessity of having a catalogue of some kind, Carlyle replied:—"Exactitude is certainly to be wished for in all cases, and I should not like to be understood as saying anything in favour of slurring over any job that a man may have to do; but I am decidedly of opinion that any catalogue whatever, even a mere auctioneer's list, printed with ordinary correctness, is preferable to no catalogue." To an objection raised as to the great difficulty of preparing an accurate catalogue of the books in such a large library, we have this exceedingly characteristic reply:—"I can conceive that a man might spend his whole existence, and that the whole existence of innumerable men might be spent in cataloguing to perfection the works in such a library

as this. But it is like any other mass of confusion which a man has to put in order. If a man insists upon getting every brick into a mathematically exact rectangular shape, he will never finish his work; he must be satisfied with a certain degree of accuracy. And if he is a man of sound intellect, and generally honest and faithful, and not of pedantic intellect, he will be satisfied with that; he will ask himself the question in sobriety and wisdom, What he can do to assist the public, and not, How much approbation or fame he will get out of it; that is a question he will be obliged to sink altogether in his own mind. He must be content to know that he will probably get little but abuse for the best he can accomplish. But if he bears in mind that what he is called upon to do is to prepare a catalogue that shall enable the people of England to make use of the books in the Library, then his task becomes possible." In these utterances on "fame" and "reward" the student of Carlyle will discern an echo of many a well-known passage in *Heroes and Hero-Worship* and in *Past and Present*. This reply to the objection of the Commissioner is a little practical illustration of the doctrine of work; that a man should put his hand to the duty that lies nearest to him, and faithfully carry that out, looking

for reward not in the praise or recompense of his fellow-men, but in the fact that the task *is* well done.

Touching on the point that a mere rough Catalogue would not guide a student to recondite works, we have a reply from Carlyle, in which he introduces the name of his brother, Dr. John Aitken Carlyle, and refers to the latter's researches while preparing his translation of the *Inferno* of Dante. "A person would be very unwise, if he wanted such a work, to search for it by the Catalogue. He would learn what the work was from his previous inquiries; and he would be able to recognise it out of the Catalogue, even if he had very little trace of it there. I may perhaps be allowed to give an instance. A friend of mine was yesterday looking for an old Italian work, which he found under a title where he by no means expected to find it. The work was Brunetto Latini, and he found it under the title of *Brunet*, as if the author had been a Frenchman, and 'Brunet' his *surname*, not his name. It was a manuscript. If he had merely looked into the Catalogue for that work he would have looked in vain." (*Lord Seymour.*) "Did that person know that it was a manuscript?"—"Yes, he knew well about it; and could look

Dr. Carlyle's Dante researches.

for it on this side and that, or he never would have discovered it at all; for he found it at last under a wrong title. But seeing that wrong title, he thought here perhaps was the book he was in search of, and he found it to be so." "That shows the inconvenience of an imperfect catalogue?"—"Yes; but it shows the great convenience of having some catalogue; and how much superior even a bad one is to none." (*Lord Wrottesley.*) "Have you any objection to mention the name of that gentleman?"—"It is my brother, Dr. Carlyle, who has been writing about Dante lately, and is in quest of these *Brunetto* matters: he mentioned the circumstance to me last night, not in the way of accusation at all, but as showing the incorrectness of the catalogue in some instances." In further reference to this knotty point of the catalogue, we have these more specific statements:—"Elaborate catalogues are not what we require; but legible catalogues, accessible to everybody. The grand use of any catalogue is, to tell you, in any intelligible way, that such and such books are in the Library. All other merits of a catalogue are as nothing compared with that. I should expect it to be a simple thing enough to draw up a list of the names of the books, which would be a great help to the

student. You must exercise a moderate share of human intelligence over that: if you happen to have a large share of human intellect, and any great knowledge of books, you will be able to arrange the classes,—and you will do it just in proportion to the quantity of intellect you have; for that seems to be the function of the human intellect —to go into chaos and make it cosmos. A man of sound understanding will not do the thing more minutely than is indispensable, but he will do it faithfully up to his limits. I should consider that it would not be at all difficult to arrange books in catalogues under the various classes. There might be one catalogue of works on English History, and I would have that circulated everywhere. There might be a catalogue of works on the French Revolution; a catalogue of works on the Reformation; a catalogue of works on English History during the Civil War. In that way catalogues of various kinds might be arranged; and one general shelf catalogue, telling any man who came there whether such and such a book was in the Library. And I would have a total abrogation of that arrangement by which a man is obliged to go and seek for a book out of the Library himself. I

Human intelligence requisite.

consider that entirely unreasonable. Like a haberdasher requiring me, if I went into his shop and asked for a yard of green ribbon, to tell him in what drawer the ribbon was lying. 'Drawer?' I should naturally answer: 'I want such a ribbon! I tell you what I want: and *you* must know in what drawer the ribbon is.'"*

Illustration of the shopman and his drawers.

Speaking on the question of public libraries in the provinces, Carlyle says:—"If there is not going to be any real study in England, there is, of course, little use in distributing catalogues,—there is little use in keeping up the Library at all. But I hope the time is coming when there will be a public library in every county,—when no Englishman will be born who will not have a chance of getting books out of the public libraries. I am sorry to believe that we, of this country, are worse supplied with books than almost any other people in the civilised world. I have seen it stated that in the island of Iceland a man has a better chance of getting books out of the public resources than we have. I believe every Icelander, when

Reading in Iceland.

* Carlyle made use of this illustration of the shopman and his drawers in conversation on the subject of the British Museum with the present writer many years afterwards.—Ed.

he comes to Riekiavik to sell his year's produce of stock-fish or whatever else, gets a number of books, by order of the King of Denmark, out of the library there, and carries them home to read in his own house in the winter-time; a privilege that no Englishman has at all. This, as far as I understand, is the only public library we have." Doubtless it was at that time. Now, however, a good public lending or reference library exists in most of the great English towns. In this case, as in many others, a suggestion of Carlyle has been carried into practical effect. Carlyle was one of the first to advocate the establishment of public baths; he was one of the first to insist upon the necessity of a national system of education. And those who profess themselves unable to find plain and practical teaching in his writings should not forget these instances of his practical foresight. In the cases above alluded to, the things that Carlyle declared urgent came about even during his own life-time; there is all the more reason, therefore, to hesitate before stigmatising him as a visionary upon other points which seem at present more remote from the sphere of the practical; such as his proposals that the army and navy should be employed during time of peace, that the paupers should be drilled and

made to do useful work on the reclamation of bog-land, &c., that there should be Captains of Industry and an organization of labour, that merit should be recognised and encouraged everywhere to rise from the ranks, that the province of the executive and legislative bodies should be more exactly defined, and many others which lie scattered up and down the pages of *Chartism*, *Past and Present*, and *Latter-Day Pamphlets*. This was not by any means the first time that Carlyle had expressed himself strongly on the importance of books, and later on he told the students at Edinburgh that the chief use of a University was not to teach a man his profession, but to teach him to read in various languages, to give him, in fact, the key to books. Returning to the evidence before the Commission, we next find Carlyle contrasting the management of the British Museum with that of the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, much to the disadvantage of the former. He admits, however, that the extent of the collection at the British Museum makes it difficult to supply readers with such accommodation as that offered at the Advocates' Library, "and," he says, "the first remedy for that would be to institute more libraries

Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

in London than at present exist. I believe there are six libraries in Paris." (We have already seen that Carlyle was active in founding one of the best of metropolitan libraries—the London Library in St. James's Square.) "The people who frequent the Reading-Room at the British Museum are very miscellaneous in their character; perhaps many of them persons whom it is not worth while to take much trouble to accommodate. The use they make of the Library is to assist them in drawing up articles for compilations, Dictionaries, and Encyclopædias, and the stuff called 'useful knowledge.' They are a very thick-skinned race. There are not many persons who are prosecuting any inquiry which involves much delicate intellect. I was extremely anxious, while reading the books about the Civil War in England, to get into the room myself where those books are, and to have liberty to get up to the works and look at them, and take them down as I pleased, and investigate them; perhaps to employ two or three clerks to take extracts from them: but I found that that was not feasible. And, indeed, I can conceive great difficulties that might be in the way of that; it would be only a very small select class of persons, not one in a hundred of those wanting to get into the room, who could

have such a privilege. I was told that the librarian was extremely civil, and that he admitted some into his room: but I had no acquaintance with him; I could not apply to him. I spoke to various official people on the subject, and I was informed that it was impossible I could be allowed the privilege. I found out a hardy intelligent amanuensis who worked for me, or I must have broken down in the enterprise. I could not have existed in the position in which I was there." (*Chairman.*) "Do you consider that by the establishment of lending libraries a considerable number of the ordinary readers of the Museum might be drafted off from the Reading-Room of the British Museum?"—"Some, doubtless; but that would be no complete remedy. I believe," added Carlyle, with humorous exaggeration, "there are several persons in a state of imbecility who come to read in the British Museum. I have been informed that there are several in that state who are sent there by their friends to pass away their time. I remember there was one gentleman who used to blow his nose very loudly every half hour. I inquired who he was, and I was informed that he was a mad person sent there by his friends; he made extracts out of

'Insane state' of readers at Museum.

books, and puddled away his time there. A great number of the readers come to read novels; a great number come for idle purposes,—probably a considerable proportion of the readers. And, on the whole, a vast majority come to the Reading-Room chiefly to compile and excerpt; to carry away something which they may put into articles for encyclopædias or periodicals, biographical dictionaries, or some such compilation. I do not suppose it to be very urgent that much more accommodation should be afforded to *all* those various classes of people." In the *Bibliothèque Royale* in Paris, said Carlyle, there were no vexatious obstructions in the way of obtaining books:—"I found a very large room in the *Bibliothèque Royale*, a much finer room than we have here in the British Museum" (this was spoken, it must be remembered, of the former, not the present Reading-Room); "and a gentleman with a staff of assistants round him, established in the middle of the room, who immediately undertook to find the book for me. . . . I told him the nature of the book by such a description as suffices a man in ordinary life. If I want to specify a man, I do not begin by defining all his qualities and scientific attributes; I call

The Paris *Bibliothèque.*

him by the name of John Thompson, and he is easily to be found by any man who is willing to find him."

On this matter of the catalogue there is much questioning and answering which it would be tedious to reproduce here. There is one reply, however, which reminds one of a small passage of tongue-fence in the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*. Pressed again and again by the Commissioners to state in detail his views with regard to the catalogue, Carlyle at length rebels :—"But, as I have told the Commissioners, I am not a catalogue-maker, and I have not turned my mind particularly to it. I merely understand that it is a work which ought to be done by a man of order; and that a man of order will arrange a catalogue properly, and a man of disorder will not do so. And you will see what real work there is in your man by the progress he makes in the catalogue,—by the figure he cuts in arranging the huge mass of jungle that he has to arrange." This speech indicates Carlyle's method in dealing with human affairs. It was not his business as a teacher to point out specific remedies for social ills—he had no 'Morrison's pill' to offer to cure at once all the evils of society. But his method was to rouse the conscience and the enthusiasm of each individual,

to set these working; and the issue must be sound. Thus he declines to make the catalogue himself; he says, Find a fit man, and he will make a good catalogue. So, in the passage referred to in the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, when discussing with "a certain Law-dignitary" the question, "What to do with our criminals?" "'I suppose,' said one ancient figure not engaged in smoking, 'the plan would be to treat them according to the real law of the case; to make the Law of England, in respect of them, correspond to the Law of the Universe. Criminals, I suppose, would prove manageable in that way: if we could do approximately as God Almighty does towards them; in a word, if we could try to do Justice towards them.' 'I'll thank you for a definition of Justice?' sneered the official person in a cheerily scornful and triumphant manner." But the "ancient figure" declines this challenge, as Carlyle declined that of the Royal Commissioners; it was no business of the ancient figure's to define Justice, rather that of the man whose trade it was to administer it. The "ancient figure" only knew there was such a thing, and that it must be acted up to; —"'Well, I have no pocket-definition of Justice,' said he, 'to give your lordship. It has not quite been my trade to look for such a

definition; I should rather fancy it had been your Lordship's trade, sitting on your high place this long while. But one thing I can tell you: Justice always *is*, whether we define it or not. Everything done, suffered or proposed, in Parliament or out of it, *is* either just or else unjust'; " &c.*

Referring again later on to the King's Pamphlets, Carlyle says:—" To have any fair chance of getting the complete benefit of these pamphlets, I ought to have been allowed to sit down beside them, and two or three men with me, and to have turned from one pamphlet to the other, and to have got everything searched in that way. I consider it a great pity that that is not done with respect to those pamphlets on the Civil War, and to such other materials of invaluable English History in the British Museum Library." (*Lord Seymour.*) " Do you mean that every literary man who comes to the British Museum ought to be allowed to have two or three men with him to examine the books?"—" I mean that literary men who come for purposes like that for which I came, should have the power of bringing two or three clerks with them; and of sitting in some place separated

* *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, No. 2, " Model Prisons."

from the men who come to read now in the Reading-Room, and who blow their noses in an insane state; and I consider that they would have a chance then of getting real good out of the books in the Library: whether it is feasible or not I do not know. I was able to do without it, by dint of great effort." "Are the officers of the Museum to judge between the reader who comes and says that he is writing that which is to be a valuable history, and another person who is writing merely for the Useful Knowledge Society?"—"How that is to be judged of I do not know; but it is a thing requiring to be judged of, and also to be decided justly. That the fact does exist is very clear. And if the fact does exist, and there is no remedy for it, it is so much the worse for the Library of the British Museum, and for the whole world. It must be for the Trustees to say in what way they can judge of it." . . . "I wish to understand under what system you wish the Library of the British Museum to be managed?"—"I have not formed any system for the management of the Library; it is not my business. My business at the Library was to try to get a little task of my own worked out; I accomplished that; and I am now endeavouring to give the Commissioners the benefit of any experience I have had. I have

formed no scheme for the management of the Library: but I should say that if a man came with an ingenuous and honest purpose to investigate English history, he ought to have a fair chance of trying the resources the establishment affords. And he cannot do that now, for it is in perfect confusion." With the conduct of the attendants, however, Carlyle had no fault to find:—"I wish to bear my testimony to the intelligence, serviceableness, and methodic accuracy of all the servants that I see about the Reading-Room. No better class of men have I seen anywhere; many of them have come to me, and volunteered to help me through the difficulties that beset my path. . . . So far as I have seen, every servant in the Reading-Room seems to be a worthy person, anxious to assist the readers: and if I had any suggestion to make, I should say that they ought to be better paid; they seem to be rather poor-looking men, and I should say that they were deserving of more than they now get."

From the remainder of Carlyle's evidence we select a few of the more characteristic passages:—"A library is not worth anything without a catalogue—it is a Polyphemus without any eye in his head." "If you are to have a catalogue at all, you must front that diffi-

culty" (of the constant accumulation of new books). "There are various classes of books which are but little added to; those books about the Civil War are very complete. The catalogues upon some other subjects would be nearly complete, and would not require to be added to for perhaps ten or twenty years; and then you might have an addendum at the end. I consider that having a catalogue would be the greatest improvement; I have stated so again and again. The next important thing would be, to have more space, and some attempt at classifying the readers,—putting those who are reading novels, or who are in an insane state, in a place by themselves; and putting men who are prosecuting serious studies in some place of their own, where they might have a great deal more composure than they now have." We will conclude by reproducing part of the conversation on new books, and the kind that should be purchased. The replies are in Carlyle's most characteristic vein:—"You are not able to give the Commissioners any opinion as to the purchase of books, whether they are well selected, or whether you could suggest any arrangement by which more useful works to the public might be secured for the Library, especially foreign works?"—"No, I am unable to give any opinion upon that. I

have not consulted the Library with that view. That, and indeed all else, must depend upon the kind of management you have within the Library itself. In fact, after all one has said, everything must depend upon that; you must get a good pilot to steer the ship, or you will never get into the harbour; you cannot direct the people on board by a speaking-trumpet from the shore. You must have a man to direct, who knows well what the duty is that he has to do; and who is determined to go through that, in spite of all clamour raised against him; and who is not anxious to obtain approbation, but is satisfied that he will obtain it by-and-by, provided he acts ingenuously and faithfully." It is a habit with Carlyle to repeat over and over again any phrase or illustration of his own that he regards as happy or pertinent, and this figure of the speaking-trumpet often does duty in his books. "I do not consider new books generally are best worth buying for libraries; and I should be rather chary of buying them if I had the charge of the Library. Selection I should think the most important virtue. Every British book of course we get in this Library. In many places they reject great masses of new books; in some places they have a condemned cellar for them. I have heard they do so at Trinity College,

Cambridge; they keep a magazine in which they put all those books—a condemned cellar; they pile them up in heaps; if anybody happen to want any of them, they are brought out; if after a certain number of years nobody wants them, they are lying there, and you can light the fires with them. There has been an immense increase in the publication of books of late years, and selection is therefore of much more importance for a library than formerly. If a man went out and collected everything he heard a noise about, he would make a frightful mess of it in the end." "Do you not think that for a national collection universality is important?"—"Not quite the most important. If I saw a book decidedly bad, I would do everything I for my part could to prevent its being read by any human being. If I were ordered by my superior officers to go and buy it of course I would do so." "But a book that you would condemn I might approve?"—"Doubtless. But I should be in a very poor way, if I did not know my own mind about it, too, and were not ready to act on my opinion." "You do not propose that the acquisitions to the Library should depend upon the opinion of a single man?"—"No. I mean that every man should have a sincere opinion, and should be

Bad books.

prepared to act upon it." "In what way do you consider the selection of books for a national library could be best made?"—"The librarian is the man that must, of course, have something first to say upon it; and if I were the librarian I should say, in reference to any book that was decidedly bad and false, 'I will not buy that book, if I can help it.' But I should expect to be occasionally overruled by the Trustees, who would represent the sceptical part of the public; they would say to me, 'Though you are averse to this book, you are overruled.' I should say, 'Very good, I have done my part.' Certainly no work coming from the realms of darkness ought to be sent up to the realms of day and allowed to do evil to the sons of men, if it can be hindered." Appropriately enough, remembering his great sceptical philosophic namesake, it is Mr. Hume who is now examining Carlyle, and who, representing for the time being the sceptical part of the public, puts this question:—"Are you not aware that many books which were supposed to be of the character you have stated in former days are put forth in a time at which there is a change of opinion on many of those matters; and that, if your opinion were acted upon, you would shut out those books altogether?"—"Yes," replies Carlyle; "and

this is perhaps the small benefit we get out of the application of that principle of universal scepticism, which goes from one end of the world to another at present. Every man declines to have any opinion of his own, but asks the world what their opinion is. By adding zero to zero a thousand times you will not make a sum; zero, *nothing*, is your sum after all. But as regards this refusal to take certain books into the Museum Library, observe I could not, perhaps would not, object to such a book's being published. I would let the book swim for its life, and it would survive if it were worth anything. But every man should consider that the Almighty has given him powers of judging, and that he is responsible for his exercise of the power. He should form his own opinion upon the matter, or take a wiser if he can fall in with it, and act upon that as far as circumstances permit him." "Do you not consider," still urges Mr. Hume, "that the books in the Library of the Museum ought to be a selection to suit people of all classes of opinion?"—"Yes; and I should be very catholic; much more so perhaps than you expect. Where I found any kind of human intellect exercised, even though the man were a blockhead, if he were trying to do his best, I would not reject his

book. But where a man was a quack, and his work was decidedly bad, I should consider I was doing God service, and the poor man himself service, in extinguishing such a book; and in short, that it was necessary to be *select* in choosing books out of the whole world." ("O my brother, be not thou a quack! Die rather, if thou wilt take counsel; 'tis but dying once, and thou art quit of it for ever."*) (*Lord Wrottesley.*) "I understood you to say that you had no complaint to make of the Library of the British Museum being deficient in any branch of literature?"—"Not from my experience, for I have never tried it. I gave up all hopes of studying general literature in the British Museum, after I found what difficulties there were attending it; and I restricted myself to certain special subjects." †

With this answer Carlyle's evidence comes to a close. Such speeches as those upon fame, intellect, and quackery have seldom been addressed to any Royal Commission; and we feel that no apology is needed for having reproduced, even at considerable length, this evidence of

* *The French Revolution:* A History. By Thomas Carlyle. Ed. 1839, vol. i. p. 72.

† *Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Constitution and Government of the British Museum; with Minutes of Evidence.* London: Printed by William Clowes and Sons, 1850, pp. 272-285.

Carlyle, since it throws additional light upon the character of the man, and upon the difficulties with which he had to contend while preparing two out of the three of his great historical works.

One final effort Carlyle made four years later to avail himself of the resources of our great National Library—an effort which proved still more abortive than the two previous ones. The circumstances relating to it will transpire in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER III.

CHARLES DICKENS.—CARLYLE'S VISIT TO IRELAND.—LEIGH HUNT'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY. — MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE.

On the evening of the 12th May 1849 Charles Dickens gave a dinner, at which Carlyle was one of the guests, to a select party of friends, to commemorate the starting of his new serial story, *David Copperfield*, of which the first number had appeared just a fortnight before. To the graphic pen of the late Mr. Forster, Dickens's biographer, we are indebted for a pleasant little glimpse of this dinner-party. We will give it in his own words :—

May 12th, 1849.

"Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle came, Thackeray and Rogers, Mrs. Gaskell and Kenyon, Jerrold and Hablot Browne, with Mr. and Mrs. Tagart; and it was a delight to see the enjoyment of Dickens at Carlyle's laughing reply to questions about

his health, that he was, in the language of Mr. Peggotty's housekeeper, "a lorn lone creature and everything went 'contrairy' with him." Things were not likely to go better, I thought, as I saw the great writer,—kindest as well as wisest of men, but not very patient under sentimental philosophies,—seated next the good Mr. Tagart, who soon was heard launching at him various metaphysical questions in regard to heaven and such like."

Visit to Ireland.

In the autumn of this year (1849) Carlyle paid a visit to Ireland, in the company of Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy. One small result of this visit was the long-forgotten humorous fragment, "from Mr. Bramble's Unpublished *Arboretum Hibernicum*," which he gave to Duffy on this occasion as a contribution to his Journal, and which duly appeared in *The Nation* newspaper of December 1st 1849. It is reprinted, with the other articles on Irish subjects, in an Appendix at the end of this volume.

It was the rumble of the thunder afar off preceding the storm to follow. Other premonitory threatenings of the like kind are audible

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* *The Life of Charles Dickens. By John Forster.* Vol. ii. (Lond. 1873), p. 489.

in the ensuing letter to Mr. Parker, which contains also a sly allusion to a character in *Martin Chuzzlewit*,—affording an additional proof of Carlyle's familiar acquaintance with the creations of Dickens's fancy.

Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Harris.

"Chelsea, November 14, 1849.

"DEAR SIR,

"Apparently, it cannot make much difference either to the paper or me, whether we appear in December or in January. But the fact is, that paper was meant as a kind of small pilot-engine, or proof-parakite, to determine the path (and destiny for life or death, perhaps) of certain other masses of blotted stuff that lie in the rear of it;—and this is a matter which ought to have been decided long ago, and must not now be left waiting longer.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"There is therefore a certain degree of chance that this paper, if not printed by you till January, may already be disposed of otherwise. If it still remain undisposed of, surely you shall be very welcome to it then. But in the meanwhile, please let me have it again immediately; that this long-slumbering affair keep itself *awake* till a settlement do arrive for it.

"There is, as I say, considerable likelihood that the paper may remain for you in January; but there is not any certainty:—and I must go on with the experiment, or flying of the proof kite, above alluded to.

"'The Editor of *Fraser*,' is not he yourself and *Mrs. Harris*? I always understood so; or perhaps I should not have made so free in that establishment!

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

Mr. Parker was far too discerning and sagacious an editor, however, and far too good a man of business, to allow such a contribution to slip through his fingers; and accordingly Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" duly appeared in the December number of *Fraser*.* Mr. Parker seems to have been anxious also to make *Fraser's Magazine* the vehicle of publication for the other papers described as lying "in the rear of it"; and it is in reply to overtures from him to that effect that Carlyle writes as follows:—

The Nigger Question.

* No. 240 (vol. xl. pp. 670-679). In the first Collected Edition of Carlyle's Works (1858) this Discourse was prefixed as a "Precursor to *Latter-Day Pamphlets*."

"Chelsea, December 6th, 1849.

"DEAR SIR,

"There is a considerable mass of dislocated papers, definable as 'written rubbish' for most part, now lying here, which must gradually get itself arranged into some form or other, by printing or else by burning: but I find nothing that could handily be got ready for your next number; nor indeed do I think the matter would in general be very suitable for that vehicle.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"The four copies of the *Negro Question* came duly yesterday: thanks for such punctuality.

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

It was not many weeks, however, before the confused mass of papers did get itself arranged into the shape of a series of "Latter-Day Pamphlets," eight in number, which under their respective titles of "The Present Time," "Model Prisons," "Downing Street," "The New Downing Street," "Stump Orator," "Parliaments," "Hudson's Statue" and "Jesuitism," appeared successively at fortnightly and monthly intervals between January and July 1850, to the dismay even of many of Carlyle's admirers and disciples. They excited, it would seem, "a

Latter-Day Pamphlets.

good deal of attention, and not a little criticism in the newspapers and other periodical publications. The general verdict was anything but flattering; in some instances, indeed, grossly contradictory and contemptuous; but the writer's meaning was often strangely misapprehended, and even here and there quite wilfully misconstrued. Nothing could be more perverse or palpably unfair than the great outcry raised against these pamphlets, and the manner in which they were for the most part criticised. 'Able-editors' selected the most extravagant-looking passages, and, presenting them apart from the context, in that way *showed them up*, jeeringly asking readers whether such passages were not exactly so much nonsense? It is easy to cry down almost any writer by such a mode of criticism. By this method, at any rate, Carlyle's meaning was utterly distorted, wrenched aside from its natural applications, and in all ways more or less misrepresented. Let the reader who has not yet read these Pamphlets, for the most part disregard the verdict of the newspaper critics, and, using such faculty as he may have, strive honestly to understand them for himself. Wild and singular as they look, they are, nevertheless, intelligible, and may, by an ingenuous mind, be

actually comprehended. They cannot be said to contain any opinions which are not to be found in the author's former works; it is only in the mode of their announcement, and in the application given to such opinions, that these papers present anything of novelty. We have the same emphatic denunciation of shams, the same vehement exhortations to conform ourselves to the laws of God's universe, the same recognition of the need of able men to conduct and manage our affairs, the same prophecy of ruin to us if something of all this be not practically adopted. The peculiarity of the Pamphlets is, that in them the writer's views are brought to bear directly upon the political and social questions of the day. The composition is mostly of the nature of *rhapsody*—vehement, irregular declamation, full of wild force and splendour, and uttered as with the fury of a prophet. There is no logical argument, no laborious deduction of conclusions from established facts and principles; everything is prompt, dogmatic, and immediate, as though the writer *saw* the truth, and the authority of his vision were sufficient for its announcement."

That the 'milk of human kindness' was not dried up in Carlyle's heart, in spite of these explosions and fulminations that were making

everyone so uncomfortable, abundant proof is afforded by the following beautiful letter addressed to his old friend Leigh Hunt, after reading his then newly-published *Autobiography*, while the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* were still in progress. It should be added that this letter has hitherto been very incorrectly printed. The garbled, inaccurate, and incomplete version which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* for July 1862* has been reproduced unquestioningly in several successive Memoirs of Carlyle that have been published from time to time, both before and since his death. The letter is now first correctly printed from the original autograph, which we were fortunate enough to have an opportunity of inspecting some two years ago, when it came into the possession of Mr. Alexander Ireland of Manchester, the greatest living authority on all matters appertaining to Leigh Hunt, and himself a valued friend and correspondent of Carlyle.

Letter to Leigh Hunt on his *Autobiography*.

"Chelsea, 17th June 1850.

"DEAR HUNT,

"I have just finished your *Autobiography*, which has been most pleasantly occupying all

* Vol. vi. pp. 239-240

my leisure these three days; and you must permit me to write you a word upon it, out of the fulness of the heart, while the impulse is still fresh to thank you. This good book, in every sense one of the *best* I have read this long while, has awakened many old thoughts, which never were extinct, or even properly *asleep*, but which (like so much else) have had to fall silent amid the tempests of an evil time—Heaven mend it! A word from me once more, I know, will not be unwelcome, while the world is talking of you.

To Leigh Hunt.

"Well, I call this an excellent good book, by far the best of the autobiographic kind I remember to have read in the English language; and indeed, except it be Boswell's of Johnson, I do not know where we have such a picture drawn of a human life as in these three volumes. A pious, ingenious, altogether *human* and worthy book; imaging, with graceful honesty and free felicity, many interesting objects and persons on your life-path,—and imaging throughout, what is best of all, a gifted, gentle, patient and valiant human soul, as it buffets its way through the billows of the time, and will not drown though often in danger; *cannot* be drowned, but conquers and leaves a track of radiance behind it: that, I think, comes out more clearly to me

than in any other of your books;—and that, I can venture to assure you, is the best of all results to realize in a book or written record. In fact, this book has been like an exercise of *devotion* to me; I have not assisted at any sermon, liturgy or litany, this long while, that has had so *religious* an effect on me. Thanks in the name of all men. And believe along with me that this book will be welcome to other generations as well as to ours. And long may you live to write more books for us; and may the evening sun be softer on you (and on me) than the noon sometimes was!

"Adieu, dear Hunt (you must let me use this familiarity, for I am an old fellow too now as well as you). I have often thought of coming up to see you once more; and perhaps I shall one of these days (though horribly sick and lonely, and beset with spectral lions go whitherward I may): but, whether I do or not, believe for ever in my regard.

"And so, God bless you,

"Prays heartily

"T. CARLYLE."

We do not envy the man or woman who can doubt the tenderness of heart that prompted and inspired the writing of such a letter as

that. Leigh Hunt himself was deeply affected; and came over to Cheyne Row to weep out his thanks in person; for involuntary and certainly not unmanly tears did choke his utterance on the occasion. The present writer remembers Carlyle telling him once how much touched they were—his wife and he—with Hunt's gratitude and emotion.

Here is another instance, only two days afterwards, taken from Macready's Diary, of Carlyle's tender humanity of heart.

"June 19th, 1850.—In the evening we were surprised by the entrance of Carlyle and Mrs. C. I was delighted to see them. Carlyle inveighed against railroads, Sunday restrictions, almost everything, Ireland—he was quite in one of his exceptious moods. I love, however, to hear his voice. Mrs. C. left one of his *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, with a corrected sheet, from which he had expunged an eulogistic mention of me, thinking 'I might not like it.' He little knows what value I set upon a word of praise from him. Mrs. Carlyle wanted Catherine's aid about a dress for a great ball at Lord Ashburton's, to which Carlyle wished to go."

Macready and *Latter-Day Pamphlets.*

Towards the end of July in this year Carlyle paid a visit to Walter Savage Landor at Bath.

Each of these two widely dissimilar but perhaps equally remarkable men appears to have been captivated by the other.

"I am expecting Mr. Carlyle on Wednesday," Landor wrote to Mr. Forster on the 25th July 1850: "it will be a holiday, a gaudy-day, for me." "The evening so passed in Bath to the survivor seemed always memorable. He brought away from it an impression never since effaced, not of the wrath only of the divine Achilles, though it thundered and lightened over many subjects, but of the manners that should belong also to such a leader of men; of a hospitality and courtesy in its way quite noble; and of scholarship, in the old fine and beautiful sense that the word once had, such as Carlyle had met with in no other man. Nor was the liking this meeting left behind it less strong on the other side. 'He was truly,' added Carlyle, 'a royal kind of man.'" "I am a great advocate for hero-worship," Landor wrote to Mr. Forster two years after the visit; "and when you have looked closely into Carlyle you may discover him to be quite as much of a hero as Cromwell."*

Carlyle's visit to Landor at Bath.

The following letter (now printed, we believe,

* *The Life of Walter Savage Landor. By John Forster* vol. ii. p. 485.

for the first time) was addressed, as is apparent from the contents, to a London publisher (possibly, nay probably, to Mr. Parker, though it is not one of the series communicated to us as before mentioned; or perhaps to Mr. Chapman, of the firm of Chapman and Hall):—

"Chelsea, August 31, 1850.

"My dear Sir,

"I sent you a German literary gentleman called Hartmann, some time ago; of whose objects or qualities (except that he was an amiable intelligent man, and could speak little English), I did not then know much.

Moritz Hartmann.

"I have since read a prose book of his; which is really very clever: I have again seen the man himself too; and learn that, among other things, he has long had a popular *Life of Huss* (the Bohemian Reformer) in view;—and comparing *him* with *it*, I really find it likely he might make a pleasant and valuable book of it. He is himself a Bohemian, a scholar, poet, and man of sense and humanity; knows the Czech language (Huss's mother-tongue), has rummaged the Prague archives, &c. &c.,—in short, I wish you would give him half an hour to speak to you about this. He wants an English pub-

lisher; he knows (or can know) Mrs. Austin; has the resources and likelihoods I mention:—it would be a real charity in you to tell him, if such is the *fact*, that English Bibliopoly *cannot* listen to his proposal. He leaves this country in a fortnight. He has already learned to talk a good deal of English; his French and all his other speech is highly transparent: you will have no difficulty as to a medium of communication.

"Hartmann was member of the Frankfort Parliament, member of &c. &c.; but he is nothing of the truculent revolutionist; far from it! He is one of the mildest, clearest of young German celebrities; actually a man of natural intelligence; qualified as I describe to write a Life of Huss;—and has the beautifullest beard in nature!

"Half an hour to him if you can afford it. His address is, Moritz Hartmann, Esq., 25, Winchester-row, New-road; but he will himself call again.

"And so begging your forgiveness for trouble laid on you, now and heretofore,

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

It will not be surprising to any one that

Carlyle should have been attracted to such a robust and massive sample of noble manhood as the late Charles Kingsley, or that he should have been gratified to have such a man and such a writer for a disciple. No one who has read *Alton Locke* will ever forget Sandy Mackaye's unfailing and inexhaustible citations from 'Master Tummas,' and many have doubtless thus made (as the present writer is free to confess he did) their first acquaintance with Carlyle. The Kingsleys had lived at Chelsea, where their father was Rector, for many years; and there had probably been some personal acquaintance and intercourse with Carlyle at a much earlier date than this. But here is Carlyle's acknowledgment of *Alton Locke*, written after reading the book, in a letter to the author:—

Kingsley's *Alton Locke*.

" Chelsea, October 31, 1850.

" It is now a great many weeks that I have been your debtor for a book which in various senses was very welcome to me. *Alton Locke* arrived in Annandale, by post, from my wife, early in September, and was swiftly read by me, under the bright sunshine, by the sound of rushing brooks and other rural accompaniments. I believe the

To Charles Kingsley.

book is still doing duty in those parts; for I had to leave it behind me on loan, to satisfy the public demand. Forgive me, that I have not, even by a word, thanked you for this favour. Continual shifting and moving ever since, not under the best omens, has hindered me from writing almost on any subject or to any person.

"Apart from your treatment of my own poor self (on which subject let me not venture to speak at all), I found plenty to like, and be grateful for in the book: abundance, nay exuberance of generous zeal; headlong impetuosity of determination towards the manful side on all manner of questions; snatches of excellent poetic description, occasional sunbursts of noble insight; everywhere a certain wild intensity, which holds the reader fast as by a spell: these surely are good qualities, and pregnant omens in a man of your seniority in the regiment! At the same time, I am bound to say, the book is definable as *crude*; by no manner of means the best we expect of you—if you will resolutely temper your fire. But to make the malt sweet, the fire should and must be slow: so says the proverb, and now, as before, I include all duties for you under that one! 'Saunders Mackaye,' my invaluable countryman in this book, is nearly perfect; indeed I greatly wonder how you did

contrive to manage him—his very dialect is as if a native had done it, and the whole existence of the rugged old hero is a wonderfully splendid and coherent piece of Scotch *bravura*. In both of your women, too, I find some grand poetic features; but neither of them is worked out into the 'Daughter of the Sun' she might have been; indeed, nothing is worked out anywhere in comparison with 'Saunders;' and the impression is of a fervid creation still left half chaotic. That is my literary verdict, both the black of it and the white.

"Of the grand social and moral questions we will say nothing whatever at present: any time within the next two centuries, it is like, there will be enough to say about them! On the whole, you will have to persist; like a cannon-ball that is shot, you will have to go to your mark, whatever that be. I stipulate farther that you come and see me when you are at Chelsea; and that you pay no attention at all to the foolish clamour of reviewers, whether laudatory or condemnatory.

"Yours, with true wishes,

"T. CARLYLE."*

* *Charles Kingsley, his Letters and Memories of his Life. Edited by his Wife.* Lond. 1876, vol. i. pp. 244-45.

Here is the substance of a letter of advice, dated "November 17, 1850," addressed to a young man whose name does not transpire :—

". . . Apparently you are a young man of unusual, perhaps of extreme sensibility, and placed at present in the unfortunate position of having nothing to do. Vague reverie, chaotic meditation—the fruitless effort to sound the unfathomable—is the natural result for you. Such a form of character indicates the probability of superior capabilities to work in this world; but it is also, unless guided toward work, the inevitable prophecy of much suffering, disappointment, and failure in your course of life. Understand always that the end of man is an action, not a thought. Endeavour incessantly, with all the strength that is in you, to ascertain what — there where you are, there as you are—you can do in this world; and upon that bend your whole faculties, regarding all reveries, feelings, singular thoughts, moods, &c., as worth nothing whatever, except as they bear on that, and will help toward that. Your thoughts, moods, &c. will thus, in part, legitimate themselves, and become fruitful possessions for you; in part fall away as illegitimate, and die out of the way; and your goal will become clearer to you every step you

courageously advance toward it. No man ever understood this universe; each man may understand what good and manful work it lies with him to accomplish there. 'Cheer up, there's gear to win you never saw!' So says the old Scotch song, and I can say no more to you."

A few weeks before Christmas (Saturday, 7th December 1850) was started a new little weekly miscellany, of the size of *Household Words*, entitled *Leigh Hunt's Journal*. Its existence was brief, and it did not last far on into the new year. A set is not now easily procurable. To us the sole significant thing about it is that Carlyle was induced to give his friend Hunt a curious little contribution, to help him on with his venture, which duly appeared by instalments in the first, third and sixth numbers. This contribution of Carlyle's was entitled "Two-Hundred-and-Fifty Years Ago: A Fragment about Duels. From a Waste-paper Bag of T. Carlyle."* In a note appended to this piece when he afterwards included it in his *Miscellanies*, Carlyle described it as "portion of a History (or failure of a History) of the reign of James I." Among the manuscripts mentioned in Carlyle's Will

Leigh Hunt's Journal.

* Reprinted in the *Miscellanies*, ed. 1857 (vol. iv. pp. 315-324), and in the two subsequent editions.

Fragment of a History of the Reign of James I.

is "a set of fragments about James I., which were loyally fished out for me from much other Cromwellian rubbish, and doubtless carefully copied, more than twenty years ago, by the late John Chorley;"—so that we may still hope to see a further portion of the work thus left unfinished and thrown aside.

A very interesting letter must here be introduced. Mr. Parker had consulted Carlyle as to the merits and likelihood of a manuscript "Life and Times of Oliver Cromwell,"—the work apparently of a young and unknown writer. There are some inimitable touches in this letter, *e.g.*—the reserved and measured praise accorded to the book as "capable of informing the simpler sort of readers (provided they do not break down into yawning over it);" the allusions to Cromwell's intermittent appearances in it,—"Oliver gliding out and in like the moon in a wet night;"—the strictures on the diluted expression of the writer's opinions—"any view or opinion that was not already my own (*minus* the water here added to it);"—and the advice to the author to "steam out at least one-third, which may be accounted aqueous." But here is the whole letter:—

"Chelsea, January 12, 1851.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have just run over your MS., diligently glancing into it *to the extent of two hours*; —and find in it a good deal of accurate and diligent, if not very recondite reading, upon the History of Oliver and of England in that period; the results of which are set forth with an intelligence which I cannot call high or new, but which may be called lucid, innocuous, and capable of informing the simpler sort of readers (provided they do not break down into yawning over it) upon various points about the History of England in those days. The conclusions your author arrives at are those in which I for one may very well *agree*; and certainly, in my opinion, the more persons are convinced upon them and informed about them, the better.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"But I must say farther, the true title of it would be 'The Seventeenth Century: a Biography,' or 'English Puritanism, a do.';—for the great bulk of the work turns not on Oliver at all, but on matters common to him and all his contemporaries whatsoever, the *nature* of English Puritanism, Puritan Conservatism; History of James and his Theologies and Politics, do. of Charles and his do. do.,—Trial of Strafford, Irish

Rebellion, &c. &c.,—Oliver gliding out and in like the moon in a wet night, and often for long sections not seeming to appear at all. Excluding the Appendix, Oliver (I think), in any legitimate sense of Biography, may occupy about *a fourth* of the Book; including the Appendix perhaps about a fifth: the rest is History and Discussion of the kinds alluded to above,—very harmless, meritoriously exact too (so far as I see), and containing many particulars by no means known to everybody; but not set forth with any great felicity, nor, I should think, quite appropriate in a Book styling itself 'Biography.' In Oliver's particular History I did not notice any particular of a new kind,—nor any view or opinion that was not already my own (*minus* the water here added to it), or everybody's in a sense.

"If the author were to rewrite his MS., compress it greatly (steaming out at least one-third, which may be accounted *aqueous*), and call it 'English Puritanism,' or some such name, it might really be a book capable of instructing various people, and be read, not uncreditably to him, along with the *Isaac-Taylor* and *Liberal-Dissenter* kind of speculations, which I believe are much sought after among certain large classes of our reading public at present. But I would strongly recommend rewriting and compression!

Changing of the name, too, for several reasons; though that is not so important.

"What pity this diligent young writer were not attached as subaltern to some man of real intellect and insight who could turn his powers to their true use, instead of leaving them unguided to seek their own use in this wide sphere! Such, however, is the course at this epoch.—What kind of 'History' he may yet write, we will not predict; but the present, I venture to say, is by no means the best he could already do.

"The MS. lies here, sealed, for your man.

"Believe me,

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

In July 1851 (the Crystal-Palace year) a Peace Congress was held in London, which Carlyle was invited to attend. The following is his reply, addressed to Mr. Henry Richard, who was chairman of the committee of arrangements:—

"Chelsea, July 18, 1851.

"SIR,

"I fear I shall not be able to attend any of your meetings; but certainly I can at once avow, if, indeed, such an avowal on the part of any sound-minded man be not a superfluous

On Peace and War.

one, that I altogether approve your object, heartily wish it entire success, and even hold myself bound to do, by all opportunities that are open to me, whatever I can towards forwarding the same. How otherwise? 'If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men;' this, sure enough, is the perpetual law for every man, both in his individual and his social capacity; nor in any capacity or character whatsoever is he permitted to neglect this law, but must follow it, and do what he can to see it followed. Clearly, beyond question, whatsoever be our theories about human nature, and its capabilities and outcomes, the *less* war and cutting of throats we have among us, it will be the better for us all. One rejoices much to see that immeasurable tendencies of this time are already pointing towards the result you aim at; that, to all appearance, as men no longer wear swords in the streets, so neither, by-and-by, will nations; that, among nations, too, the sanguinary *ultima ratio* will, as it has done among individuals, become rarer and rarer; and the tragedy of fighting, if it can never altogether disappear, will reduce itself more and more strictly to a minimum in our affairs. Towards this result, as I said, all men are at all times bound to co-operate; and,

indeed, consciously or unconsciously, every well-behaved person in this world may be said to be daily and hourly co-operating towards it—especially in these times of banking, railwaying, printing, and penny-posting; when every man's trafficking and labourings, and whatever industry he honestly and not dishonestly follows, do all very directly tend, whether he knows it or not, towards this good object among others. I will say further, what appears very evident to me, that if any body of citizens, from one, or especially from various countries, see good to meet together and articulate, reiterate these or the like considerations, and strive to make them known and familiar—the world in general, so soon as it can sum up the account, may rather hold itself indebted to them for so doing. They are in the happy case of giving some little furtherance to their cause by such meetings, and, what is somewhat peculiar, of not retarding it thereby on any side at all. If they be accused of doing little good, they can answer confidently that the little good they do is quite unalloyed—that they do no evil whatever. The *evil* of their enterprise, if evil there be, is to themselves only; the good of it goes wholly to the world's account without any admixture of evil, for which unalloyed benefit,

however small it be, the world surely ought, as I now do, to thank them rather than otherwise.

"One big battle saved to Europe will cover the expense of many meetings. How many meetings would one expedition to Russia cover the expense of! Truly I wish you all the speed possible, well convinced that you will not too much extinguish the wrath that dwells, as a natural element, in all Adam's posterity; and I beg to subscribe myself, Sir,

"Yours very sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

The following letter was addressed to the late Sydney Dobell, the accomplished author of *Balder* and *The Roman*, whom Carlyle had met a few weeks previously at Malvern:—

"Chelsea, October 17, 1851.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Thanks for those pamphlets you have now sent according to request; which are a very welcome arrival here. I have read your three articles,* in the prescribed order, with real pleasure and interest:

To Sydney Dobell.

* At Mr. Carlyle's request the articles on "Currer Bell," on Newman's "Phases of Faith," and on the "Bards of the Bible," contributed by Sydney Dobell to the *Palladium* in 1850, had been sent to him."—ED.

it is by no means every day one sees such a busy swift sharp-cutting brain, and such an ardent hoping heart, pouring themselves forth in the way of 'literature,' as are manifest here! Long life to you; and a clearer and clearer course through that terrific jungle! Beyond question you will cut your way, and do a good turn to your generation — if you are *tough* enough, and can *endure*; but that too, as I suppose you understand, is a necessary part of the problem. Happy he who can hold out till the sacred *substances*, and eternal fruits, disclose themselves, amid this mad multiplicity of worthless illusive husks and hulls! I see you are full of the idea of universal revolution; which, in fact, is not to be excluded from any open mind that looks upon these years of ours: but you do not yet know how frightful a state that is for a man of real earnestness; probably you will know by-and-by! At any rate, we cannot help it a whit, not we: and must, at all stages of our history, study to 'abide in hope,' a deeper and sterner *Hope*, or a softer and gladder one, according to the time of day with us, or the natural temper given us. I do not quarrel with you at all on that head; nor impugn your notions about Christianity, Currer Bell, &c. &c.; but find it all very beautiful in the given time

and circumstances—as the light of the sun is, through whatever *media* it shine.

"I wish you many years, and plenty of strength, for the work that lies ahead of you; and pray heartily you may prove *victorious* more and more, in the best sense that can be given to that word.

"With many kind regards to Mrs. Dobell, whose recovery I am right glad to hear of, and whom (which is an important fact) I very well remember,

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."*

Life of Sterling.

Carlyle's *Life of John Sterling*† appeared in the autumn of 1851, and in two months reached a second edition. "It was not so much the interest of the subject as the reputation of the author which occasioned this demand. Sterling is not much known to the ordinary public; indeed, such knowledge or rumour of him as there was prior to the appearance of this volume was in great part a *mis*knowledge, needing to be corrected. Sterling's actual performances in literature,

* *Life and Letters of Sydney Dobell.* Smith, Elder & Co. 1878, vol. i. pp. 235-237.

† *The Life of John Sterling.* By Thomas Carlyle. London: Chapman and Hall, 198, Piccadilly, 1851, pp. iv. 344.

though manifesting a fine capability, are not very considerable in amount, or of such importance as to entitle him to an express biography, apart from accidental considerations. 'His character,' says Carlyle, 'was not supremely original, neither was his fate in the world wonderful.' But Sterling had gained a degree of notability on account of certain changes of opinion. He had been for some eight months a clergyman in deacon's orders, and subsequently relinquished that profession, partly through ill health, and partly, it appears, from the differences which had arisen between his speculative views and the creeds and articles of the Established Church. Accordingly, when, in 1848, Archdeacon Hare published a sketch of Sterling's life, by way of introduction to his collected writings, a certain class of sectarian newspapers and periodicals took occasion to treat both the work and Sterling's memory with a good deal of censure and severity. Though Hare's narrative is distinguished by the greatest kindliness, and the warmest appreciation of his friend's gifts and excellences, he had been led by natural tendency and position, as a churchman, to dwell with preponderating emphasis on the man's reputed heresies; 'by no means,' as Carlyle remarks, 'extenuating the fact, nor yet passing

lightly over it—which a layman could have done, as needing no extenuation—but carefully searching into it, presenting all the documents of it, and, as it were, spreading it over the whole field of his delineation, as if religious heterodoxy had been the grand fact of Sterling's life, which even to the Archdeacon's mind it could by no means seem to be.' The consequence was, that of the living original, John Sterling, his general opinions, character, and activities, an altogether partial and distorted image was presented to the world. Sterling's friends naturally objected that a man whom they had so intimately known and loved should be thus perversely pictured. Carlyle, among the rest, desired that all this should be corrected, but for some time was doubtful how such an object could be accomplished. By degrees, however, as he observes, arose this final thought,—'that at some calmer season, when the theological dust had well fallen, and both the matter itself, and my feelings on it, were in a suitable condition, I ought to give my testimony about this friend, whom I had known so well.' Whether the world required a Life of Sterling or not, it could not but be glad to possess so mild and graceful a revelation of the gentler phases of Carlyle's nature, and to learn how hearty and true a

man he was in his private affections and relations. The great stormy giant, with his vehement rage, and wild, withering contempt, is here softened and subdued into quiet tenderness and suppressed sorrow; and, sitting watchful at the tomb of a memory which he loved, he has sown the place of sepulture with flowers, and for ever hallowed it with beauty."

Here is a letter of Carlyle's which alludes to the newly published book and to its reception:—

"Chelsea, Nov. 4, 1851.

"DEAR BROOKFIELD,

"Thanks for your cordial little testimony on my behalf, which is a real pleasure to me, and was a glad surprise withal, for I thought you had already sailed.* That small Sterling affair,—a poor little job incumbent on me in this world, and now hustled off me and finished,—will do very well; in spite of the roaring of the Bulls of Bashan,

To the Rev. W. H. Brookfield.

* This letter was written on the eve of Brookfield's voyage to Madeira. William Henry Brookfield was born August 31, 1809 (a few weeks after Tennyson), at Sheffield. Entered Trinity College, Cambridge (where he was contemporary with Tennyson) in October 1829, took Holy Orders 1834; married in 1841 Jane Octavia, youngest daughter of Sir Charles Elton, Bart., of Clevedon Court, Somerset, the translator of Hesiod (the lady referred to in Carlyle's letter). He died July 12, 1874 (within a few weeks of his sixty-fifth birthday); and was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery. "Frank Whitestock," in Thackeray's sketch entitled "The Curate's Walk" (published in *Punch*), was intended for Brookfield.

who in various regions, as I understand, are busy enough—more power to their elbows!

"I adopt in late years a simple precaution, not to read any of that balderdash, how loud soever: sense is worth reading, even though abusive of you; but nonsense is not, nor should one read it when there is a remedy,—not if it were proclaimed with a '10,000 jackass power,' would I read it, for one!

"We heard of you lately through the Grange, from two hands: H. Taylor says you show ample 'spirit and vivacity;' the Lady A. winds up an equally kind account with this brief sentence, citable against *Mrs. B.*, 'I like her very much.' My own hopes of you from this voyage are strong. May all good attend you in it, dear B.! Continue, as you do, to make manful front against a world of confusions and obstructions, such as is allotted to all,—to each of us his own kind of it, burden *enough* for every back, however strong; and, with your eye on the eternal pole-stars (which do shine to those that have *eyes*), step quietly along, quietly and manfully as heretofore, bating no jot of heart or hope. And know always, if that is some comfort, which it is, that there are friendly souls here, which look lovingly across to you, with clear sympathy, with clear recognition, and will loyally welcome you back

again when the bleak weather has abated a little.

"With many true regards, I wish you a good voyage, and bid God bless your household and you. And so adieu for this time.

"Yours ever sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

It was in the winter season of this year that Carlyle's characteristic little fragment on "The Opera" was contributed to a then highly popular and fashionable annual, entitled *The Keepsake*.

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* *Keepsake* for 1852. Edited by Miss Power. London: D. Bogue, pp. 86-92.
Reprinted in Carlyle's *Miscellanies*, ed. 1857 (vol. iv. pp. 325-329), and in the two subsequent editions.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST VISIT TO GERMANY.—PLANNING HISTORY OF FRIEDRICH.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH PANIZZI.

For some time past Carlyle had been choosing a new subject for the third, and what proved to be the last, the longest, and the most laborious of his great historical works. He was focussing his attention more and more upon Germany, upon Prussia, and its history as culminating in Frederick the Great. In furtherance of this scheme, which, as yet, however, was in the state of incipience or incubation only, he resolved on a visit to Germany in the autumn of 1852, to look around him and explore a little of the actual ground. Previously, however, during the month of August, he stayed for some time at his native place, on a pious visit to his mother, now growing well

Planning subject of new historical work.

stricken in years. Before his departure, we find him writing the following letter to Mr. Parker, —the earlier part of it a recommendation of a certain Mrs. Sketchley, authoress of a "religious novel," and the concluding paragraph announcing his travelling project :—

"Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan, N.B.
"August 26, 1852.

"My dear Sir,

"Mrs. Sketchley, a lady who has already some experience in literature, and is a person of superior sense, conduct, and manners, has now in a state of forwardness a 'religious novel' which she thinks might be suitable to your line of publishing. I have not myself seen the MS.; but my wife, whose judgment in such things is really good, seems to augur well of it;—and on the whole I may safely request and advise you to take a survey of the piece, and *not* to reject except after actual examination. There is no danger of high-flown religionism, or bother about articles and systems; but there will be, if I mistake not, a true piety of disposition visible, and great acquaintance (grounded on many years' experience now) of the world and its ways.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"In four or five weeks hence (after a run to

Germany, now imminent), I hope to be in London again, and to hear good news of you there,—and even, if the Powers be propitious, to see you soon.

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"J. W. Parker, Esq., Publisher,
"West Strand."

The Critic.

The following lively report of a conversation which a writer on *The Critic* (a weekly literary journal, then in its zenith, but long since defunct, and to which the best of existing hebdomadal Reviews are "as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine,") professes to have held with Carlyle during his stay at Berlin on this first visit to Germany, is given here in *extenso*, both because it is the very best extant record with which we are acquainted of what Carlyle's talk was at its best, in the matter, the manner, the method, nay, even in the trick of it,—and also because we have every reason to believe, from internal evidence, that it is substantially (with, perhaps, a little permissible garnishing) an authentic report of an actual conversation that did really take place, more or less as described :—

The Critic Abroad.*

Time: *An autumn afternoon of* 1852. Scene: Berlin; "*Unter den Linden.*" *The Critic and Mr. Thomas Carlyle come unexpectedly upon each other, and testify to a mutual recognition by dignified gestures of subdued surprise.*

Conversation with Carlyle at Berlin.

Carlyle.—How are you, Sir? What has brought you here? Oh! I don't need to ask that. The universal nomadic tendency of man in this age, that seems to send him gadding and roaming and rambling, with perpetually-restless, never-satiated hunger after novelty, in steam-boats, railway-carriages, all conceivable kinds of vehicle and conveyance, wherever there is anything new to be seen, or felt, or even to be eaten and masticated, and thrust down into his stomach. Ah me! it is very sad! I often say to myself, when I look upon it in calm moments, and consider the whole perilous influences and insane outcome of it, I often say to myself:—'My poor friends, vehiculating there in your gigs, and shuttling along in your railway-carriages, and tumbled about in steam-boats,

* From *The Critic, London Literary Journal*, November 1, 1852.

oppressed with infinite nausea, till you are almost tempted to ask Death himself to come and deliver you out of it all, my poor friends,' I feel often tempted to say, 'you had far better have stayed at home by your own firesides, pursuing your employments, looking out on the daily earth and sky, and streets, and shops even, and familiar faces that you are accustomed to—what in the world brings you here? The Palais Royal and high-spiced dishes? I tell you, Sir, the Palais Royal and high-spiced dishes will afford you but a very slight and poor and transient, and, in fact, contemptible enjoyment. The Palais Royal and spicy dishes will, in the long run, bring you infinite dyspepsia, and darken earth and heaven for you—not to speak of the doctor's bills.' Then they go to Rome, the *Eternal City*, as they call it, the chosen abode of the most despicable quack that the earth at this present moment holds;—they see nothing of the quackery, however, or at least, like poor miserable creatures as they are, they shut their eyes upon the whole quackery of the concern, and get up a kind of factitious enjoyment, which means real *ennui* and weariness, gazing at statues, and pictures, and frescoes, to all of which they have no real or genial relation.—Ah me! And then there are others, real brave and stout men,

too, that go away hunting after something they call the *North West Passage*, and they are lost and cannot be found, and exploring expeditions are fitted out at an expense that would set the pauperism of Middlesex to work, and the newspapers are filled full of mendacious, absurd, and contradictory rumours that carry their parentage —that of the father of lies—upon the face of them; and people even come boring you to subscribe a guinea, which I for one never do give, and stoutly shall refuse to give to any such preposterous enterprise as seeking a handful of men at the North Pole that deserve to perish for their folly in ever going there. Really people are very mad in this age!—After all, what can they do, poor fellows? It is a sad residence, England, at this day of ours, to any earnest man, or even to any man with real energy and impulse in him slightly above that of the beaver, who seems to be the model entity of England now, and its absurd Cobdens and Brights, whose reign, I rather suspect, however, is drawing to a close, perhaps faster than they imagine. And after all, too, the poor fellows get a change of air and scene that often does them good, perhaps, and they go away back a little refreshed, it may be, to the grinding competition of their shops, and dark, dim, pestiferous counting-houses,

and absurd noisy law-courts, and to me most wearisome Parliamentary janglings and palaverings and debating. On the whole, perhaps, they cannot well do otherwise than they do, and depart almost anywhere, even to the North Pole, to get away from all that!

Critic.—I perceive, Sir, from various paragraphs in various German publications, that you are said to be engaged in collecting material for a Biography of Frederick the Great; and that it is with this view that you yourself have become a partial nomad, and exchanged a residence in London for a residence in Berlin. To many English readers, Sir, of your works, it is of some importance to know whether you contemplate such an enterprise, and I should be happy to be the medium of conveying to the English public authentic information on this interesting point.

Carlyle.—I am reading about him, I am reading about him; you may tell them that, if you like. Yes! Fritz was a great man; perhaps, after all, the really greatest European man, in the practical department of things, that we have had amongst us since Oliver Cromwell's time. And a very different kind of greatness, too, was Fritz's from Oliver's; a kind of lean, rigid, almost 'hero as drill-serjeant' sort of great-

ness, but a decided hero in his way; not a god-like, but a king-like and man-like one,—just the sort of figure to do the work he did do in his place and age. A species of cloud has rested on Fritz's memory in England and France, chiefly put over him by babbling purblind essayists, and historians, and biographers, who have listened to and pinned their faith upon Voltaire's absurd and intrinsically wicked version of him and his life and character. After all, it is they, and the like of them, that are the cause of almost every perversion and useless controversy in this universe,—men who look without insight, and speak without wisdom;—men who talk to you about Pericles and Epaminondas, and obsolete ethnic heroisms, and shut up young men in colleges and universities to study Greek, and when they have left the colleges and universities, off they go, very naturally, to Athens and poor King Otho, and write books about the archæologies of the region, and come home and get them reviewed, Sir, and probably proceed to some other still more fatal absurdity; a taste for the absurd having been carefully and assiduously cultivated in them, 'from their tender nails,' as Horace says. The truth I solemnly believe, and will deliberately assert to be this;—that Frederick had real faculty and stuff in him to

equip a dozen of your Plutarch's Greeks; and he possessed the inestimable advantage for us of belonging to an age and country exceedingly like our own, and his heroism can be a kind of example to us; which is more than can be said of most of Plutarch's Greeks, or Romans either. A man with all the accredited heroic human qualities of Aristides, or Pericles, or Epaminondas, and born in an age and country extremely like our own, filled full of all manner of shams, lies, obstructive despicabilities, threatened at every moment to be submerged by infinite mud-oceans of falsehood and brutal hypocrisy, and who was not conquered by them, but did conquer them—built, so to speak, a triumphal chariot out of the world-barricades raised to oppose him, and did ride in it, almost to the Gods! This Berlin, this Prussia, peculiar, strong, invincible, that will play a great part in European affairs—he made them, he made it, almost every inch of them; as Wren's epitaph says —*Si monumentum quæris, circumspice!* And I come here to contemplate him and his real fruitful solid work, instead of rushing off, like these absurd ape-like dilettantes, to gaze on frescoes and pictures, and the 'mummeries of superstition,' as little Lord Johnny said, or 'the blue Symplegades,' or Venice, where "rows the silent

gondolier."* What do I care about the gondolier? What is the gondolier to me? His silence is probably a real benefit to his neighbours and to himself. Would that nine out of every ten, I say, of the literary men of Europe and the world would follow the gondolier's example. Far from poetically bewailing such a consummation, I would most heartily, in my most prophetic dialect, welcome it as a right blessed deliverance from infinite babble, which Europe will yet have to put a stop to altogether, if she is not to to rush over into bottomless unfathomable abysses of accursed chaotic anarchy and miserable beggarly permanence of everlasting, prospectless, hopeless woe, and utter, entire, definite, unmitigated and unmitigable execrability and sheer damnability!

Critic.—This city, Sir, the creation of your hero, is no great shakes in an architectural point of view; but on the other hand, to the literary stranger, it presents the *agrémens* of much valuable intellectual society. I have already had the pleasure of conversing, though for ten minutes only, with the venerable Tieck, and hope soon to spend an evening in the

* "In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier."
BYRON, *Childe Harold*, Canto iv., § 3.

society of the eminent and philosophical Schelling. To you, Sir, who have done so much to forward the cultivation of German Literature in England, to you, no doubt, the doors of the various literary notabilities of Berlin have opened wide at the mention of your celebrated name, and you have already received from Tieck and from Schelling the cordial welcome due to the most illustrious of their British expositors?

Carlyle.—Yes! I have talked with both of them—Tieck, a genial, nobly-gifted man, with almost the finest head I ever saw. Schelling is a high, abstruse, speculative personage, who mounts quite out of sight in his talk occasionally. Very curious about England, both of them are; they dimly feel and see what there is of greatness in inarticulate practical England, in spite of her rather rude, and on the whole, perhaps, not altogether justifiable rejection of them and their airy poetics and metaphysics. Curious figures both, extremely interesting to me, these two *ultimi Romanorum*. Very unlike any literary phenomena we have, or ever shall have, probably, in England. On the whole, I consider English authorship, as it is at present, to be the beggarliest, basest, meanest, ugliest, at once most detestable and most contemptible phasis of a form of activity

that probably will never again in this world, have attached to it an atom of the dignity and sacredness that have attached to it in some, certainly, extremely rare ages and regions. What with their Paternoster-row books and quarterly reviews, and monthly magazines, and infinitude of cheap journals, and huge broad newspapers, there has been no such vociferous, aimless, infinitely controversial confusion since Babel; and these fellows have not even, and never had in their heads or thoughts, the scheme of a Tower of any kind, however absurd, impracticable, or insane. I often say that life among literary people in London is like pilgriming through a big universe of hawkers, each bawling at the top of his voice, and not an article or item of any kind of ware or commodity has any one of them to offer you, when you come forward and ask for a sight of his goods. A universe of bawling hawkers, and not a pinch of snuff even among them to dispose of! On the whole, I have given up reading contemporary books and newspapers, as entirely inane and unprofitable trash; and would as soon think of sitting down to a dinner of boiled peas-cods, as of expecting any nourishment from the kind of stuff that Paternoster-row offers you, and has the impudence to ask you for hard

cash in return. Mere crackling of thorns beneath the pot, and the thorns are fast going out, and the pot, it is becoming evident to all men that concern themselves about the matter, cannot be made to boil by any such contemptible species of fuel; and I expect, and indeed I hope, that your whole branch of activity will soon be utterly stagnant, and finally be drained off as an intolerable nuisance; and that the ground it covers may produce something better than miscellaneous stenches, tormenting rheums, perilous fevers and agues, and deadly fatal malarias, that are fast killing the minds and souls of nine out of every ten of the population of the 'literary world,' as they call it.

Critic.—You have a perfect right, Sir, to entertain this or any opinion of our literature. But it strikes me as rather inconsistent with the notions which you have just expressed, that you should yourself be now returning to an arena on which you pronounce so sweeping a condemnation. I would further observe—

Carlyle.—Ay, yes! How are you getting on? I generally give a glance at your publication, when it happens to fall in my way. Bacon talks of *lumen siccum*—dry light—well, to my organs of sight, there is a kind of dry dusk envelopes the whole literary region, and any little glimmer of

light is welcome. There is always something ingenious or lively in *The Critic*; I must say that for it. That seems to be a brisk lad, with a kind of impetus in him—'Herodotus Smith' is the name of him—that writes sketches of periodicals and newspapers, and that sort of thing. In a strange book I once wrote, called *Sartor Resartus*, I made a German professor, who was the hero of it, say he understood there was extant a history of the British Press, which had for title, "Satan's Invisible World Displayed." Ha! ha! To Smith, however, that region seems to be invested with a certain vague, attractive splendour, as if he would like to take up his residence in it, which I would by no means advise him to do. Then you have a less vivid man, who is sometimes worth looking at—'Pat Grave,' he calls himself, or '*Jack* Grave—'

Critic.—Sir, his baptismal name is Frank.

Carlyle.—Ay! Pat, or Jack, or Frank. And there is, too, an eloquent writer, who signs himself 'Apollodorus,' and who seems in a state of great and constant antagonism to me, which is a pity in its way. I daresay we agree in fundamentals, although our dialects may differ. The man 'Atticus,' too,—he has a certain high heroism of thought and tendency about him, and decided noble radiancy and polish of diction.

Well! it is my dinner-hour. Good-bye to you! Go on and prosper!

On Saturday November 13th, after his return to London, we find Carlyle visiting Bunsen, and "expressing himself warmly about his journey in Germany, where he went to see the sites of the great Frederick's battles, as well as other spots of historical note. With peculiar enthusiasm he spoke of the Wartburg—'I think that little room, in which Luther stood fighting God's battle against the whole world, is the most sacred place upon earth!'"*

Visit to Bunsen.

Emile Montégut, the subject of the ensuing letter of introduction to Mr. Parker, had published a study of Carlyle's Life and Writings some four years previously in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*:—

"Chelsea, Feb. 12, 1853.

"My dear Sir,

"The bearer of this is M. Montégut, of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, whom I have seen twice, and several of whose pieces I have read,—decidedly with a favourable impression towards him. He

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

* *Memoirs of Baron Bunsen, drawn chiefly from family papers, by his widow, Frances Baroness Bunsen*, London: Longmans, 1868, vol. ii. pp. 298-99.

has a clear and delicate intelligence, a fine talent of expression and composition, and appears to be every way an amiable and accomplished young man.

"Being on a visit to this country, with time on his hands, it has struck him he might perhaps write something acceptable for *Fraser*; and he requests me to introduce him to you for a consultation on that object. He has clearly a good talent for writing to his own countrymen on English subjects; perhaps, under your advice, and with a good translator, he might succeed in writing something to the English on French subjects, upon which of course he is full of knowledge new to us here. If he had a judicious translator to consult with, it would clearly be a great help. At all events, I think a few minutes of your time will not be ill spent on such an offer, from such a man; and to him your words cannot but throw light on the project he has. Pray let him be welcome to you on those terms.

Emile Montégut.

"I remain always,

"Yours truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"J. W. Parker, Esq.

"142, West Strand."

Here is a letter recommending to Mr. Parker's notice a Life of Allan Ramsay, the author of *The Gentle Shepherd*. The very idea that such a book, in the year 1853, could have been still feasible or possible for a publisher to entertain as a profitable speculation, is a singular proof of Carlyle's *naïve* ignorance of the currencies and tendencies of the book-market at that time, in matters appertaining to the *belles-lettres*.

Life of Allan Ramsay.

"Chelsea, March 20, 1853.

"My dear Sir,

"Yesterday I quite forgot to ask you, among other things, if you could have any notion to concern yourself with a new *Life of Allan Ramsay*, the Scotch Poet, author of *The Gentle Shepherd*, &c.?

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"A man in Edinburgh, whom I do not know, has written to me twice on the subject,—the second time, a day or two ago,—to say that the *work is done*: 'two hundred pages' of nice MS., which he wishes me to *read*, and also to write an 'Introduction' to. Both of these requests I mean to *decline*: but the man, who seems to have diligence, enthusiasm for his task, and other good qualities, and has really tried a thing worth doing, ought to have what help one *can* give him. I must own, to judge by his letters (or

last letter, for I cannot remember the first), he does not promise to be any great witch at composition: but he is perhaps an average, or more, in that respect too; his work is *brief*, his subject *good* (at least for Scotland, and the scholarly part of England); he professes to give *Letters* of Ramsay;—and has really, I believe, laboured a number of years getting his book together. The question therefore is, would it probably be worth his while to send you his MS. for your examination and advice upon it? Or would you rather not see it at all?

Allan Ramsay.

"Please answer me, in one word, *just as you feel about it*; for the truth is, I have no interest in the man whatever, beyond what I describe; and can finish him off with a *general* 'No,' as I have to do so many.

"For the rest, Ramsay (Scotch *Guarini* and more) is really a considerable man; and a tolerable Life of him is wanted in the world.

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

In the spring of 1853 we have a second letter addressed to Mr. W. C. Bennett on receipt of his little pamphlet, exposing the abuses of Roan's School at Greenwich. "More satisfactory work this than your sonnet," thinks Carlyle, and writes to that effect as follows:—

"Chelsea, April 6th, 1853.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have read your little pamphlet with pleasure; as far as you are concerned, you seem to have been engaged in an anxious, disagreeable, yet indispensable duty; and to have managed your pleading with great clearness, circumspectness, and the eloquence which honest zeal inspires. Your specimen scholar from the Roan's School is a marvellous article! I hope you will completely achieve the reform of that scandalous mismanagement, to the benefit of this and future generations; and cannot but wish there were such a preacher in every locality where such an abuse insults mankind;—a rather frequent case, I believe, in poor England just now.

To Mr. W. C. Bennett.

"Such work, I continue to think, is much more melodiously 'poetical' for a human soul than the best written verses are.

"Believe me,

"Yours very truly,

"THOMAS CARLYLE."

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* *Roan's School; Past, Present, and Future. A Chapter from the Educational History of England in this 19th Century. By W. C. Bennett.* Greenwich (1853), pp. 68.

Carlyle had now begun in earnest the great historical work which was destined to occupy him for the next twelve years of his life,—the *History of Friedrich II. of Prussia, called Frederick the Great.* For purposes of study and research connected with this undertaking, he found himself a third time reluctantly compelled to have recourse to the Library of the British Museum. But the new experiment only rendered still more painfully apparent and fatally certain to him the futility of any attempt on his part to pursue a serious course of study in the General Reading-Room of that establishment.*

History of Frederick the Great begun.

Finding himself in this unpleasant predicament, Carlyle (although his evidence in 1849, already quoted at some length, had given considerable umbrage to the principal Museum officials, and to Mr. Panizzi especially,) determined to make application to the last-named gentleman, who was then Keeper of the Department of Printed Books, for the use of a private room, or of some special accommodation, that would enable him to pursue his researches under

The British Museum.

* This, it must be remembered, was fully four years before the present ample and commodious Room was built.

conditions of comparative quiet and composure. His letter ran as follows:—

"5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"April 11, 1853.

"DEAR SIR,

"When I stated, on a public occasion, some year or two ago,* that I had not found it possible to get any private room or quiet convenient corner, for reading and studying in, at the British Museum,—there followed, if rumour did not mislead me, some contradiction on your part, as if the impossibility had only proceeded from my own want of due inquiry, of due solicitation.

Letter to Panizzi.

"At the present time I shall be extremely happy if that rumour have been a true one; if I actually can, by any honest industry of mine, procure a quiet place to study in, now and then, in your establishment. For I am again in want of many helps which are in the Museum; and in the common Reading-Room, as new experience teaches me, I labour under sad disadvantages in using these.

* This evidently refers to Carlyle's examination before the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Constitution and Management of the British Museum (*vide supra*, pp. 48-82), which took place on Thursday, February 8, 1849, more than *four* years prior to the date of the above letter.—ED.

"If you could give me a good word of indication on this subject, certainly it would be very welcome; or I could meet you any day at the Museum, if that were furthersome or necessary. At any rate, if you are obliged to refuse me, I shall know it was with regret; I shall be no worse off than at present, and shall have exhausted the shadow of likelihood there was for me.

"Believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE.*

"A. Panizzi, Esq."

Mr. Louis Fagan, the recent biographer of Panizzi, does not venture to print this letter, nor Panizzi's reply to it, which, however, he hints was couched "in terms somewhat too severe." Let us, however, hear what Mr. Fagan has to say, as the apologist of Panizzi, in the matter:—

Mr. Fagan's defence of Panizzi.

"Mr. Thomas Carlyle was not one of those who were entirely satisfied with the defective Reading-Room at the British Museum, which preceded the present splendid building. Full of

* Through the courtesy of Mr. Sewening, of Duke Street, St. James's, we are enabled to print this letter for the first time.

sad experiences of the manifold inconveniences of it, he pardonably, but erroneously, imagined that it might be possible to obtain some more private and more comfortable spot wherein to pursue his studies at the Museum. In his endeavours to attain this end, however, he was not altogether successful.

"On the 11th of April 1853 the eminent historian addressed a letter to Panizzi, which he answered, we fear, in terms somewhat too severe, so much so, that we purposely avoid making public anything which was simply the fruit of former quarrels. Be that as it may, the correspondence was submitted to the Trustees four days afterwards, together with a report in which Panizzi stated that he knew of no Private Room, nor of any quieter corner in all the Library for the purpose of study, than the Reading-Room; but even if he did, he did not think that in a Public Library, supported at the national expense for public use, any person should enjoy advantages and facilities denied to the generality. Better accommodation was undoubtedly desirable for readers—for them all—but not for any especial individual, leaving others to fare as well or as ill as they might. On May 7th the Trustees approved of Panizzi's conduct.

"Not altogether content with this decision, Mr. Carlyle seems to have made an attempt to enlist on his behalf the interest of Lady Ashburton, and through her, that of Lord Clarendon. The result of this attempt will be gathered from the following letter, addressed to the latter:—

"'August 10, 1853.

Panizzi to Lord Clarendon.

"'I heartily wish it were in my power to do what Lady Ashburton requests. The following statement will show your lordship how I am placed. Mr. Carlyle wrote to me asking what Lady Ashburton asks. I informed him that there was no Private Room whatever in the Library which could be assigned to him, and that the quietest place for study was the Reading-Room. I moreover pointed out to him how invidious it would be in a public place to favour anyone—however great his merits or strong my desire to serve him. I know that individual Trustees have been applied to; I know that they have mentioned the subject to their colleagues; and I have myself submitted Mr. Carlyle's letter and my answer to the Trustees, who have approved of what I have done, and who have declined to accede to similar applications. Your lordship, I am sure, will see that it is impossible for me to

depart from the rule under such circumstances.' "*

But whatever Mr. Fagan, with the partiality of a biographer and as the mouthpiece of officialism, may have been prompted to urge in Panizzi's defence, there can be little doubt that Carlyle's very natural, very intelligible, and we think, under the circumstances, very reasonable request, was one which he might readily and gracefully have acceded to, without any appreciable inconvenience. Had the will not been wanting, the way could easily have been found. But there was evidently some personal pique, amounting almost to animosity, rankling in the Librarian's mind, which was the real though not the apparent cause of a refusal churlish in itself, discourteous, as Mr. Fagan admits, in its manner of expression, and persisted in, under influential pressure brought to bear upon him during several successive months, with an obstinacy which would be unintelligible on any other supposition. The plea that it was impossible or difficult to make any distinction between such a man and such a writer as Carlyle had proved himself to be by the year 1853, and any ordinary idle or

* *The Life of Sir Anthony Panizzi, late Principal Librarian of the British Museum.* By Louis Fagan, of the Department of Prints and Drawings, British Museum. Lond., Remington & Co., 1880, vol. i. pp. 335-336.

unaccredited reader, we must set down to sheer disingenuousness, for we can hardly attribute it to ignorance.

In making these remarks we trust it will be understood that nothing can be farther from our intention than to cast any slur on the present enlightened and liberal-minded directors of our great National Library, whose courage, discernment, ingenuity and courtesy in developing and extending the resources of the Institution, and in making them practically available to every class of readers and students, are beyond all praise.

On Carlyle Panizzi's definitive refusal to accommodate him inflicted a heavy pecuniary fine which his resources at that time were ill able to bear. Every careful reader of the *Friedrich* must be more or less cognisant of the immense mass of books, old and new, which (especially in the earlier stages of the work) had to be consulted, sometimes for a long excerpt, sometimes for a solitary reference to some name or date. Many of these were books of no intrinsic value, and yet extremely difficult to procure. Only by wearisome search among the lumber of old book-stalls, or by patiently wading through hundreds of booksellers' catalogues, could they be found at all. With all this superfluous

labour and expense Carlyle was handicapped, in addition to the slow and painful production of the great work he had undertaken. Every volume or set of volumes to which he required reference (except the very few which the London Library, or the private libraries of his friends, might yield him in the way of loan) had to be bought, and in very many cases to be sought as well as bought. This circumstance throws much light on Carlyle's bequest (in his Will lately made public) to the President and Fellows of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, of the books which he "used in writing on Cromwell and *Friedrich* (whatever of them I could not borrow, but had to buy and gather), as a poor testimony of my respect for that *Alma-Mater* of so many of my Transatlantic friends, and a token of the feelings above indicated towards the great country of which Harvard is the chief school—in which sense I have reason to be confident that the Harvard authorities will please to accept this my little bequest, and deal with it, and order and use it, as to their own good judgment and kind fidelity shall seem fittest. A certain symbolical value the bequest may have, but of intrinsic value as a collection of old books it can pretend to very little." And so he leaves

Carlyle's bequest of Books to Harvard College.

the little collection away from the great National Library, through the churlishness of whose chief officer he was compelled to amass it, owing to it at least no debt of gratitude for any furtherance in his arduous enterprise.

CHAPTER V.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE (1853–1856).

THE following letter to Mr. Parker will sufficiently explain itself:—

"Chelsea, May 18, 1853.

"DEAR SIR,

"There is some proposal to reprint just now, for the benefit of Uncle Tom and Co., that *Lecture on the Nigger Question*, which distressed the world, through *Fraser*, a couple of years ago.*

"From you I can anticipate no objection, in such case (which is still hypothetical only),—indeed I think there has been on both sides (and,

* *Fraser's Magazine*, December 1849 (three years and a half prior to the date of this letter), *vide supra*, p. 87. Reprinted, with some additions, as "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question. Communicated by T. Carlyle. London: Thomas Bosworth, 1853," pp. 48 (besides title and half-title).

at all events, it were as well there should be, for the future) an understanding that any pieces I sent you should be at my own disposal, after *Fraser* had done with them:—but certainly all rules require that I should at least speak to you of the thing, and *thank* you for the permission which I do not think you will withhold.

"Uncle Tom's flat nose would really be much better for a seasonable fillip in these extravagant days: but I could wish any other than I had been appointed for that outpost duty!

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"J. W. Parker, Esq."

One is not a little amused and amazed at Carlyle's easy tolerance of the 'theory' alluded to in the following letter, and at the trouble he voluntarily gives himself on behalf of its promulgator:—

"Chelsea, Aug. 12, 1853.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Yesterday, in your absence, I left a paper, on which your candid judgment, as to its fitness for *Fraser* especially, is much wanted.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"The writer, a person of considerable talent, of perfect respectability and

mature years, has formed by some means or other an altogether new, and to us most surprising conviction about the real *authorship* of the Plays we call 'Shakespeare's;' and is determined at all hazards, and against all difficulties, to promulgate and make good the same: this is the first sally made, in that big battle; and you now are to tell us freely what you think of it,—above all, whether *Fraser* will have it or not.

"I myself have no interest in the matter; do not, with the least completeness, understand the author's theory about Shakespeare, or even believe what I do understand of it,—or in the least need *any* new theory on the subject;—but I have read part of the paper, know the author; and for many reasons, am bound to put the thing before you, and certify as above.

"It seems ingenious eloquent writing, of its kind; perhaps, under some head or other, it may prove admissible; perhaps not. In the former case, of course the author would show face, and consult, &c.; in the latter, we are obliged to be altogether *anonymous*.

"Without hurrying yourself, yet so soon as convenient.

"Yours always truly,

"T. Carlyle."

To a gentleman at Towcester, who had written to Carlyle a letter breathing the ardent spirit of young discipleship, he returned the following characteristic and encouraging reply :—

"Chelsea, Nov. 19, 1853.

To Mr. Samuel Cooper Tite.

"Very well! 'Be diligent in business, fervent in spirit,' therefore; and let me have credit of you as a pupil!—Remember always, 'The end of man is not a thought, but an action;'—a series of manful, faithful actions (and of modest, silent, steadfast endurances withal), which make up worthily a man's life here below!—

"With many good wishes and friendly regards,

"I remain always

"Yours truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

Mr. Parker does not appear to have shown any great eagerness to secure that startling Shakespearean paper of which we heard news just now. Accordingly as November is now drawing to its close, and over three months gone since it was submitted, Carlyle thinks it high time, apparently, to jog his shoulder with a reminder.

"Chelsea, Nov. 21, 1853.

"DEAR SIR,

"Will you give me, as soon as convenient, some deliverance upon that Shakespeare MS.? I think you might, on the terms you spoke of, print it:—but you may believe me, *I* am quite impartial on the matter, and indifferent how you settle it; anxious only (for some reasons) that it *be* settled as soon as you can.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"Too late now for the December number, I suppose? But pray decide Yes or No for the January one."

On Christmas-Day of this year (1853) Carlyle's venerable mother died at Scotsbrig, in the eighty-third year of her age. She had survived her husband nearly twenty-two years.

On May 3, 1854, Carlyle addressed to the late Mr. David Laing a letter, which was printed in the "Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,"* and which, under the title of

* Vol i., 4to, Edinburgh, 1855, pp. 284-292.

"Project of a National Exhibition of Scottish Portraits," was included in the later editions of his collected *Miscellanies*.*

In January 1855 appeared in *The London and Westminster Review* a contribution from Carlyle, which had sprung out of his Friedrich studies, "The Prinzenraub: a Glimpse of Saxon History." This also is included in the later editions (but of course only in the *later* editions) of his *Miscellanies*.

The following letter was addressed to the late Alexander Gilchrist in acknowledgment of a copy of his *Life of Etty*, which he had sent to Carlyle:—

"Chelsea, January 30, 1855.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have received your *Life of Etty*; and am surely much obliged by your kind gift, and by the kind sentiments you express towards me. I read, last night, in the book, with unusual satisfaction: a book done in a vigorous, sympathetic, veracious spirit, and promising me the delineation, actual and intelligible, of a man extremely well worth knowing. Beyond doubt

To Alexander Gilchrist.

* Ed. 1857, vol. iv. pp. 330-337.

I shall finish steadily what I have begun, and small thanks to me in this instance. Etty's name was, naturally, familiar to me; but his physiognomy of body and mind, and his great merits as painter and man, were a mere rumour to me hitherto.

"I believe I may congratulate you on accomplishing a good work, of its kind, among your fellow creatures; and it is a real favour to me that I have the opportunity of enjoying myself over it, and instructing myself by it.

"I wish you all good speed in your enterprises; and solicit a continuance of your good will towards me.

"I am, with many thanks and regards,

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."*

The following letter to John Forster (a stray letter out of many scores, or possibly hundreds, that must have been addressed to him by Carlyle during the many years of their friendship) is preserved in the Forster Collection at South Kensington :—

* From the Memoir of Alexander Gilchrist appended to the New and Enlarged Edition of Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake* (Lond. Macmillan & Co. 1880), vol. ii. p. 371.

"Chelsea, 12th March, 1855.

DEAR FORSTER,

"Here is the old rubbish of a Bristol letter that I spoke of. If any Lord Nugent or other living Christian can take the least interest in it, I pray you let him be at once put in possession of it.

To John Forster.

"I am full of gloom and dispiritment about these hideous Balaklava matters, and for plenty of other reasons,—the genius of Chaos (or anti-Cosmos, at Balaklava and Chelsea too) having in general a considerable purchase upon me at present!—Let us stand to our work; and perhaps we shall wring his nose a little yet before we die.

"I hear of two new Editors, who seem to me to be little short of Lord Raglan, after their kind. Do you consider the final hour of bankruptcy has actually arrived, then, for *all* manner of things!

"Adieu, dear good Forster: I hope to try for you next Committee Meeting. Hide that old letter, at any rate, out of my road.

"Yours ever truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

The next letter, addressed to Mr. James Hannay, refers to Mr. Charles Gavan Duffy, already alluded to as having been Carlyle's companion on a tour in Ireland in the autumn of 1849 :—

"Addiscombe Farm, Croydon,
"September 5, 1855.

"DEAR HANNAY,

"Some short time ago I received a circular, with E. Whitty's signature, on the same subject as your note, and was well pleased to learn that such a project was in agitation on behalf of Duffy, to which I wished all success very sincerely, though myself unable to take part in it. I have a real regard and even affection for Duffy, whose fine, truthful intellect, and ardent humane character, were always recognizable to me, in the worst tumult of Irish confusions. His course, then, which I never could applaud for wisdom, nor rebuke without pity and respect, has all along seemed to me one of the most tragical;—and surely it has been troublous enough, tumbling in the wake of that monster of Blarney, Big O, and his 'justice for Ireland' (the ugliest impostor generated in my time),—and, alas! it *ends* in a sufficiently mournful manner, though in a manful and pathetic one, on my poor friend Duffy's part! I would

gladly go and testify these feelings on his behalf, wherever it might be useful or suitable; but, on the other hand, I can perceive this dinner will not be the place for me to do it; but, for others differently related to it than I, and who probably have somewhat other feelings to express. In short, there are multifarious reasons admonishing absence on my part,—two reasons, were there no other: permanent wish to steer clear to windward of O'Connellism, and of anti-ditto, in all their branches; and, secondly, the horror and misery I undergo in all 'public dinners' whatsoever! I pray you, therefore, let me be excused, and be believed, at the same time, to wish the enterprise heartily well, as I do.

"About a week ago, after some little movements elsewhither, I came out to this place, in the hope of shaking some of the accumulated *dust* out of me, by silence and industrious riding and walking in the solitary lanes and woods;—which I am diligently endeavouring for perhaps yet another ten days. After which I am at home in permanence; and shall hope to see you again, the first time you can get so far.

"Yours ever truly,

"T. CARLYLE."*

* Printed (not very correctly) in *The Athenæum* of February 19, 1881.

In May 1856, when we may suppose his mind to be full of the details of battles, and overflowing with military tactics, Carlyle received from Sir William Napier his *History of the Administration of Scinde*, and wrote the following letter of acknowledgment to the author :—

"Chelsea, May 12, 1856.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have read with attention, and with many feelings and reflections, your record of Sir C. Napier's *Administration of Scinde*. You must permit me to thank you, in the name of Britain at large, for writing such a book ; and in my own poor name to acknowledge the great compliment and kindness implied in sending me a copy for myself.

"It is a book which every living Englishman would be the better for reading—for studying diligently till he saw into it, till he recognised and believed the high and tragic phenomenon set forth there ! A book which may be called 'profitable' in the old Scripture sense ; profitable for reproof, for correction and admonition, for great sorrow, yet for 'building up in righteousness' too—in heroic, manful endeavour to do well, and not ill, in one's time and place. One feels it a kind of possession to know that one has

had such a fellow-citizen and contemporary in these evil days.

"The fine and noble qualities of the man are very recognisable to me; his subtle, piercing intellect turned all to the practical, giving him just insight into men and into things; his inexhaustible adroit contrivances; his fiery valour; sharp promptitude to seize the good moment that will not return. A lynx-eyed, fiery man, with the spirit of an old knight in him; more of a hero than any modern I have seen for a long time.

"A singular veracity one finds in him; not in his words alone—which, however, I like much for their fine rough *naïveté*—but in his actions, judgments, aims; in all that he thinks, and does, and says—which, indeed, I have observed is the root of all greatness or real worth in human creatures, and properly the first (and also the rarest) attribute of what we call *genius* among men.

"The path of such a man through the foul jungle of this world—the struggle of Heaven's inspiration against the terrestrial fooleries, cupidities, and cowardices—cannot be other than tragical: but the man does tear out a bit of way for himself too; strives towards the good goal, inflexibly persistent till his long rest come: the

man does leave his mark behind him, ineffaceable, beneficent to all good men, maleficent to none: and we must not complain. The British nation of this time, in India or elsewhere—God knows no nation ever had more need of such men, in every region of its affairs! But also perhaps no nation ever had a much worse chance to get hold of them, to recognise and loyally second them, even when they are there.

"Anarchic stupidity is wide as the night; victorious wisdom is but as a lamp in it shining here and there. Contrast a Napier even in Scinde with, for example, a Lally at Pondicherry, or on the Place de Grève; one has to admit that it is the common lot, that it might have been far worse!

"There is great talent in this book apart from its subject. The narrative moves on with strong, weighty step, like a marching phalanx, with the gleam of clear steel in it—sheers down the opponent objects and tramples them out of sight in a very potent manner. The writer, it is evident, had in him a lively, glowing image, complete in all its parts, of the transaction to be told; and that is his grand secret of giving the reader so lively a conception of it. I was surprised to find how much I had carried away with me, even of the Hill campaign and of Trukkee

itself; though without a map the attempt to understand such a thing seemed to me desperate at first.

"With many thanks, and gratified to have made this reflex acquaintance, which, if it should ever chance to become a direct one, might gratify me still more,

"I remain always yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."*

Two months later the following letter was addressed to Mr. J. W. Parker:—

"Chelsea, July 15, 1856.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Along with this I send a pamphlet, which contains a narrative interesting to read,—and deserving in my opinion to be known to many persons (indeed to all wise Englishmen, if that were possible) who are more or less concerned in what it says.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"I used to know Brigadier Mackenzie, and see a good deal of him about eleven years ago: he is a man of sterling principle (sincerely yet with enlightenment *religious* in mind), of very superior intelligence, of long experience in all

* *Life of General Sir William Napier, K.C.B. Edited by H. A. Bruce, M.P.* London: Murray, 1864. Vol. ii. pp. 312-314.

Indian matters; and I should think as valiant, clear and manly a character as could easily be met with;—in particular, a *soldier* (now of long service) of the very first quality, as I should judge. The word that he deliberately utters I confidently take as *true*;—*falsity*, I should reckon, *cannot* be in it; and *mistake* on any important point, from such an intellect so disciplined, is not at all likely. On reading this pamphlet, and seeing the man again, I have been struck with many feelings. The small *practical result* of all which is now this message to you.

"If you read the enclosed note (which do now, and then burn it), you will see I want you to ask yourself if there is any competent hand in your circle to whom the task I suggested to that lady could be hopefully committed? If on reflection you find there is *none*, then let the matter *end* at once; for I have no outlooks elsewhere, and cannot go farther into it, in the terrible confusion of hurry I am now in about quite other things. An article in *Fraser*, an article in the *Saturday Review*: perhaps, however, you do know somebody who could do them both, or one of them: *both*, I think, would be real *gifts* to the public; and really it is on that ground only that I would advise such a thing.—To Venables I told the story: Venables would do excellently if he liked

to engage in it. Or perhaps you know a still likelier? I should add further that Mackenzie is far too much of a soldier, gentleman, and person of sense, to think of making any clamour about his own bad usage. One of the Black Sergeants (*Havildar*, or whatever they call them) whom he knows to have had, as the reward of conspicuous fidelity, an ignominious *injustice* done him: on behalf of this Havildar, 'a respectable hoary old Hindoo soldier, now above seventy,' and dismissed as a traitor,—on behalf of him Mackenzie is decided on stirring, and will stir in the right place; but not on his own behalf at all: 'better to *eat* your peck of dirt,' he says. Which I approved of as wise.

"Well, in brief, if *you* see your way towards doing any good with Mrs. Mackenzie's documents, and MS. elucidations,—I have no doubt she will receive you like a gentlewoman, if you call and present that card enclosed. She is a very sensible, pleasant, still youngish lady (unfortunately a little *deaf*); the Brigadier, being still an invalid, lies rather in the background: but him too, I doubt not, if you wished it, you might see. *You*, I say all this while; but that of course means your literary man *a fortiori*,—though I think it would be the directest way if you went yourself.

"It would be in the highest degree unpleasant to *me*, and I well believe to the Mackenzies too, if anything *not* rigorously the *fact* were stated on this matter.—The Mackenzies leave town (I think on Monday next) for Germany: all this week (not much of it that now remains) is available for the enterprise, with 'further documents' and expositions; after that, it can only be undertaken on the basis of the pamphlet itself. I do not think there is anything very *sacred* in the 'Private-and-Confidential' character of the pamphlet,—certainly nothing beyond what is common on *all* such occasions. The writer would not himself be *seen* speaking it forth at Charing-Cross, nor will he urge any other person so to do: but *if* any other person finds good to speak it,—the writer can answer him or others: 'You are speaking *truth*,—and here is proof further, if you like.'

"But enough written. Had I *not* been in such a hurry, a few lines would have sufficed, and I should have had done much sooner!—The whole turns on your inclining to go into the business at all. I hope you will; but cannot *advise* one way or the other. If you do not, it drops so far as I am concerned. I know not at present (being indeed much hidden in my den) any body of writers, except those you have about you, who

(according to my judgment) are much worthy to have such a thing proposed to them. This, therefore, is the best I can do; and shall be *all* in that kind.

"No answer needed to *me*. If you decide quite in the negative,—merely burn all these papers, card, &c. &c., and let the thing go up the chimney.

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

One more letter to Mr. Parker belongs to this year, and is the last of the series addressed to that gentleman which we shall lay before our readers:—

"Chelsea, November 2, 1856.

To Mr. J. W. Parker.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"There is, in the last *Fraser*, a very pretty little article on America and its Kansas, &c. troubles;* which I recognise for the work of Mr. Bristed, a gentleman whom I have long heard with

* "What are the United States coming to?" Last art. in *Fraser's Magazine* of November 1856 (vol. liv. pp. 611-622). The author of this paper, Charles Astor Bristed, published, *inter alia*, *Five Years in an English University* (New York, Putnam, 2 vols. 1852), and *Pieces of a Broken-down Critic, picked up by himself* (2 vols., Baden-Baden, 1858). Another article of his ("The Triumph of Barbarism, by a New Yorker,"), signed with his initials, appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* for January 1857.

pleasure on all such subjects. Candid, loyal, clear, intelligent, a thorough 'gentleman,' as we define it;—the only man who throws any real light to me on American questions. He might do a great deal of good to both countries, and gain the gratitude of all considerate men in both, by continuing and extending in all ways this fine function of International Interpreter between America and England, for which he has such capabilities. I charge you let him want for no encouragement on your part. As a mere *writer* I find him very good; style perfect for his purpose. Only I wish he would give up saying '*at* the North,' '*at* the South,' which is a mere solecism and careless Yankeeism: no mortal would think of saying '*at* Germany,' though he would 'at Berlin' or the like: the prepositions AT and IN, we imagined, had long ago settled their account!—Please submit to him also the sad case of the word 'Fillibuster' (I think that is the current spelling): two-hundred years ago the word *Freebooter* was rife among certain English naval gentlemen (whose life corresponded) in the West India Islands; the French of the same trade caught it up there (a nice synonym of *Boucanier*, eater of *boucan*, or dried salt flesh);—caught it up, but made it into *Flibûtier*, written *Flibustier* by the old printers,

&c.;—and from this origin have sprung the dreadful progeny of *Fillibusters*, *Filliblusters*, *Fillibustiers*, and I know not what, which are oozing over into our own newspapers;* and which ought to be killed wherever met with by every respectable man.

"But all this is as nothing; mere preliminary talk, and other men's business, not my own. What I wished you to ask Mr. Bristed on my behoof is a ridiculous-looking question, but one I really wish to have answered, for *uses* it has to me. 'Speaking to Bunkum.' What is the indubitably right spelling, Bun*combe*? or as above Bun*kum*? and where is the Buncombe or Bunkum?—I really wish to know (correct, as if on oath!); but am in no hurry about it for months to come. Only, please, bear it in mind; and tell me so soon as you learn.

"Yours always truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

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* "Bucaniers, desperate naval gentlemen living on *boucan*, or hung beef; who are also called Flibustiers (*Flibûtiers*, 'Freebooters,' in French pronunciation, which is since grown strangely into *Filibusters*, Fillibustiers, and other mad forms, in the Yankee newspapers now current)." *History of Friedrich*, vol. iii. (Lond. 1862), p. 378.

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST COLLECTED EDITION OF CARLYLE'S WORKS.—PUBLICATION OF THE HISTORY OF "FRIEDRICH."—SECOND VISIT TO GERMANY.

During the years 1857–58, the first Collected Edition of Carlyle's Works was issued by his publishers, Messrs. Chapman and Hall, in sixteen monthly volumes. This had for a long time been a desideratum. The text was revised with great care by the author, and though this edition has long been superseded, whether on the score of typographical excellence, of cheapness, or of completeness, by the "People's Edition" in thirty-four volumes, published in 1872–73, it was a great boon at the time when it first came forth.

Each volume or book is complete in itself, containing a separate as well as a general title.

At the end of each work is a Summary of Books, Parts or Chapters, and an Index, and at the end of the sixteenth volume a General Index to the entire Works. The Contents were arranged as follows:—

Vol. I.:

LIFE OF SCHILLER; LIFE OF STERLING, pp. vi. 415.

Vol. II. to V.:

CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS. Collected and Republished. In Four Volumes, pp. 371, 370, 362, 395.

At the end of the first volume are printed the Preface and Introduction to "German Romance," with Note of 1857 prefixed. At the end of the fourth volume (pp. 315–363) are collected for the first time the following papers: "Two-Hundred-and-Fifty Years Ago," "The Opera," "Exhibition of Scottish Portraits," "The Prinzenraub," which had been contributed to the various publications already enumerated, since the issue of the Third Edition of the *Miscellanies*.

Vol. VI. (1858):

SARTOR RESARTUS; LECTURES ON HEROES, pp. vi. 391.

Vols. VII. and VIII. (1857):

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION: A History. In Two Volumes, pp. viii. 342; viii. 412.

Vol. IX. (1858):

CHARTISM, PAST AND PRESENT, pp. iv. 324.

Vols. X. to XII. (1857):

OLIVER CROMWELL'S LETTERS AND SPEECHES. Three Volumes, pp. xix. 388; xv. 407; xii. 480.

Vol. XIII. (1858):

LATTER-DAY PAMPHLETS, pp. 300.

Including the "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question," here printed as a "Precursor to Latter-Day Pamphlets."

Vol. XIV. (1858):

GERMAN ROMANCE: Musæus, Tieck, Richter, pp. 389.

Vols. XV. and XVI.:

WILHELM MEISTER'S APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAVELS. Two Volumes, pp. 336, 376 (including General Index to the whole Works).

In September 1858 appeared the first two volumes of Carlyle's third great History and his last great work, *Friedrich*. The title-pages of the first Edition announced its projected completion in four Volumes. The scheme of the work, however, had eventually to be extended beyond the

proportions originally contemplated. As Carlyle proceeded, the work grew on his hands, and the four volumes ultimately swelled into six, nor was it without something of a *tour-de-force*, as he afterwards told Sir George Sinclair, that he got done even in six volumes.

Second visit to Germany.

A second visit to Germany had now become necessary; and in the early autumn of 1858 Carlyle, with some reluctance and indeed only on sheer compulsion as it were, proceeded thither. Very sombre and gloomy is the account of a visit he received from him which Varnhagen von Ense has recorded in his Diary.

Varnhagen von Ense.

"*Sunday, 5th September* 1858.—Visit from Carlyle and Neuberg; * yesterday the former arrived here, accompanied by Herr von Usedom; and to-morrow early they will again set out for Zorndorf, Kunersdorf, Leuthen, Liegnitz, Sorr, Mollwitz, Prague, Kollin! Carlyle says that his book on Frederick the Great is the poorest, most troublesome and arduous piece of work he has ever undertaken: no satisfaction in it at all, only labour and sorrow. 'What the devil had I to do with your Friedrich?' His complaints are very droll, yet in part serious

* The German translator of Carlyle's *Friedrich*.—Ed.

enough; it must have cost him unheard-of labour to understand the man, if indeed he does understand him. He says that in England they know nothing of him, nothing of Prussia, and little even of Germany. All these transactions are quite unknown there, although at the time they must have known something of them. He complimented Ludmilla on her book, and said she should write more of the same kind. 'It has never happened before,' exclaimed Neuberg, 'that Carlyle has urged a woman to write; up to this time he has always dissuaded every woman!' Carlyle complains that he continues to be a bad sleeper, can stand no noise, nor a strange bed, must have bed-curtains, &c. Yet he seems to be more healthy and livelier than when he was here before, and also more resolute."

In the summer of 1859 Carlyle and his wife spent several weeks in Fifeshire, at Aberdour, and afterwards at Auchtertool, Kirkcaldy. Before returning to London Carlyle also appears to have visited Mr. Erskine at Linlathen. From Aberdour the following letter was despatched to the indefatigable American compiler, Mr. S. Austin Allibone, in acknowledgment of the first volume (then newly published at Phila-

* *Tagebücher von K. A. Varnhagen von Ense.* Band xiv. (Hamburg, Hoffmann & Campe, 1870), pp. 869-870.

delphia) of his *Dictionary of English Literature*, a laborious work of reference since triumphantly completed:—

"Aberdour, Fife,
"July 18, 1859.

"SIR,

"A good while ago (I am ashamed to acknowledge my neglect by saying so, but it was not intentional, nor is quite without excuse), your massive, impressive volume * was duly handed in at Chelsea; nor did I fail to look a little into it, though exceedingly busy then and now. I can truly say the labour you have gone into (which appears to be faithfully done, whatever I can judge of it) fills me with astonishment, and is, indeed, of an amount almost frightful to think of. There seems to be no doubt the book will be welcome to innumerable reading beings, and tell them much that they wish to know; to me the one fault was that, like the Apostle Peter's sheet of beasts, it took in 'the clean and the unclean,' and thereby became of such unmanageable bulk, to say no more. Readers are not aware of the fact—but

To Mr. S. A. Allibone.

* *A Critical Dictionary of English Literature, and British and American Authors, Living and Deceased, from the Earliest Accounts to the Middle of the Nineteenth Century.* By S. Austin Allibone. Vol. i. Philadelphia, 1859. pp. 1005.

a fact it is of daily increasing magnitude, and already of terrible importance to readers—that their first grand necessity in reading is to be vigilantly, conscientiously select; and to know everywhere that books, like human souls, are actually divided into what we may call 'sheep and goats,'—the latter put inexorably on the left hand of the judge; and tending, every goat of them, at all moments, whither we know; and much is to be avoided, and, if possible, ignored by all sane creatures. This is candidly my verdict; and I regret to think you cannot well like it; nor, as you perceive, had I any wish to produce it till summoned.

"With many respects and acknowledgments,

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

In the summer of the following year (1860) Carlyle was tempted by Sir George Sinclair to spend a few weeks at his seat, Thurso Castle. The three letters which Carlyle addressed to his host before and after the visit, are among the most characteristic and interesting that have yet seen the light. Here is the first of them.

"Chelsea, July 24, 1860.

"DEAR SIR,

"There is something so truly hospitable in the tone of your letter, something so human-

looking and salutary in the adventure proposed me, that I decide on attempting it; and mean actually to embark in the Aberdeen steamer on Wednesday, August 1 (that is tomorrow week), sea-voyaging being much more supportable at all times than the horrors of railwaying, vainly attempting sleep in inns, &c. &c.; and shall hope to be at Wick, and thence under your roof, at some time on the Saturday following, if all prosper. There!

To Sir George Sinclair.

"Most likely I shall write again before sailing; in the meantime I have only to bid you thank the beneficent Lady in my name, and say that I have good hope her angelic intentions will succeed upon me in some measure, and thus it will be a welcome help indeed. That, for the rest, my domestic habits are all for simplicity and composure ('*simplex munditiis*' the motto in all things), that I live, with clear preference where possible, on rustic farm-produce,—'milk and meal,' eggs, chickens, moor-mutton; white fish (salmon, veal, lamb, three things tabooed to me); reckon an innocent bread-pudding the very acme of culinary art; am accustomed to say, 'Can all the Udes in Nature, with all the kings' treasuries to back them, *make* anything so *good* as good cream?'—and likewise that 'the cow is the friend of man, and the French cook

his enemy,'—and not one day in ten drink beyond a single glass of wine. Sufficient on that head. For company I want none but yours and hers:—the great song of the everlasting sea, and the silences of earth and sky, will be better 'conversation' to me than the kind I have long had!

"On the whole I am quite gay with the hope of becoming a '*König in Thule*' (though without the misfortunes and bibacities of that old gentleman). There in my *Schloss am Meer*, for awhile, I promise to become a much more human animal, were sleep restored to me, in that grand lullaby, and the rough hair smoothed down again a little. Adieu, in the hope of soon meeting,

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

A week later he writes again before starting:—

"Chelsea, 31st July 1860.

"DEAR SIR,

"Your note has come this morning; thanks once more. I write a line, as at any rate I intended, merely to say that the purpose holds; that I am booked for the Aberdeen steamer, Wednesday 1 p.m.; thence to Wick by the old program;

To Sir George Sinclair.

and that I hope to cut across, if all prosper, and find you at Thurso Castle some time on Saturday,—and there to lie down and sleep for I know not how long! If sleep do not come, you will have to shove me on to Inverness, into the current of railways; and I must go further again, were it only to fare *worse*. A brother of mine now here, Dr. Carlyle, physician once in Rome, &c., but in late years, especially in late months, a wandering man,—will escort me to Aberdeen, perhaps to Wick; intending to 'see the Orkneys, the Shetlands,' or I know not what. My wife cannot get away at present, nor for a week or two coming. She is naturally much gratified by your repeated invitation; and has often spoken of Thurso since it was first heard of here: but she cannot *sail* at all; and apart from her domestic enterprises here, which induce the desire rather of my *absence* for a couple of weeks, she shudders somewhat at the long six hundred miles of land-journey, even cut into sections; and dare not even undertake for Edinburgh till I have reported of myself from the far North.

"You need not reckon me quite an *invalid*, after all. My sleeping faculty has returned, or is evidently returning, to the old imperfect degree: but my work, but my head—In short, I

was seldom in my life more worn out to utter weariness; or had more need of lying down for a little rest, under hopeful conditions. In haste (as usual),

"Yours sincerely always,

"T. CARLYLE."

The pleasant visit over, he writes thus on his return homewards:—

"Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan,

"13th September 1860.

"DEAR SIR GEORGE,

"I arrived here, at my half-way house, the night before last; without accident to speak of, indeed with what may be called 'a pleasant voyage,' both by sea and land, if any such could now be pleasant; nevertheless I feel considerably smashed; and, for the present, at least twenty per cent. below what you and Thurso Castle delivered me at, that morning, in Scrabster Roads. Alas, one has to voyage; and there is no wishing-carpet or Fortunatus's hat to do it with, in these modern steam-days!

To Sir George Sinclair.

"At Linlathen there fell out of my portmanteau two books,—a chamber Bible, and a volume of Heinrich, which the excellent Fraser (out of

whose reach I should have laid them, but did not) had packed in by mistake! After consideration, I left them at 'Corona' to the care of Mr. Stephen junior; charging him to be so kind as to send them over at once to Mrs. Power, by whom they were to be delivered to your Edinburgh bookseller,—and by him, as I hope, reconsigned shortly to their real place of ownership. Please mention that they do arrive uninjured, when and if they do. Chelsea will be the address; in a few days I am to start off thither again, there to get upon the treadwheel again,—sinner that I am!

"Mr. Erskine was well, and all about him looking very happy. We had plenty of pious discourse for the two days I stayed; he sent many compliments to 'the good Sir George;' and I did not forget the tradition of the turbot we once heard of.

"Adieu, dear Sir, and thousand thanks for all your unwearied kindnesses and human hospitalities to me, which were *perfect* as one seldom finds them in this world. To Miss Sinclair my lasting remembrances and regards.

"Yours ever truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

In June 1861, a few days after the great fire in which Inspector Braidwood perished in the discharge of his duty, Carlyle broke a long silence with the following letter :—

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'TIMES.'

"SIR,

"There is a great deal of public sympathy, and of deeper sort than usual, awake at present on the subject of Inspector Braidwood. It is a beautiful emotion, and apparently a perfectly just one, and well bestowed. Judging by whatever light one gets, Braidwood seems to have been a man of singular worth in his department, and otherwise ; such a servant as the public seldom has. Thoroughly skilled in his function, nobly valiant in it, and faithful to it—faithful to the death. In rude, modest form, actually a kind of hero, who has perished in serving us !

Inspector Braidwood.

"Probably his sorrowing family is not left in wealthy circumstances. Most certainly it is pity when a generous emotion, in many men, or in any man, has to die out futile, and leave no *action* behind it. The question, therefore, suggests itself—Should not there be a 'Braidwood Testimonial,' the proper parties under-

taking it, in a modest, serious manner, the public silently testifying (to such extent, at least) what worth its emotion has?

"I venture to throw out this hint, and, if it be acted on, will, with great satisfaction, give my mite among other people; but must, for good reasons, say further, that this is all I can do in the matter (of which, indeed, I know nothing but what everybody knows, and a great deal less than every reader of the newspapers knows); and that, in particular, I cannot answer any letters on the subject, should such happen to be sent me.

"In haste,

"I remain, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"T. CARLYLE.*

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"June 30."

In the spring of 1862 we have a graphic glimpse of Carlyle at home and in *deshabille*, from the pen of Charles Boner:—

"April 1862. — Found Carlyle sitting in

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* Printed in *The Times*, Tuesday, July 2, 1861.

dressing-gown and slippers looking over the proofs of his 'Frederick the Great.' Mrs. Carlyle sitting on the sofa by the fire. After a while the conversation fell upon Prussia. Carlyle said the Prussians were full of intelligence and activity. There was energy and perseverance in their character—there was much resemblance to the English. If they did not do something there was little hope for Germany. Elsewhere in Germany he could see little else than talk and noise, and wretched radicalism. The king, he thought, was right, if, as he (Carlyle) believed, he meant to have no one but himself meddling in the affairs of the army, for that was and ever had been in Prussia the reliable honourable body which had done everything for Prussia. If its affairs were to be talked over and speechified about by a parliament, there would soon be an end of this.

Charles Boner's visit to Carlyle.

"The army would soon be as inefficient as the English was, with its Balaclava and its General Burgoyne, &c. He had seen nothing elsewhere that impressed him as conversation with one or two (not more) Prussian officers had done. From these two he judged all the army. From what he saw in a week or two, while travelling of the common soldiers, he judged of all the

men. He said there was, he believed, no other army like it: neither English nor French, nor any other. The officers were well educated, and with a high sense of honour; the men filled with a sense of duty. Ours, with our newspaper rant about British pluck, was nothing to it. Our officers knew nothing — absolutely nothing. Some few might, by a common sense view of things, get a sort of routine of their business, but there was and had been for the last hundred and fifty years wretched ignorance and inefficiency. Wellington came at last: he had no genius, but he was one of the not more than two or three men in all Britain who seemed to understand that from certain facts certain circumstances are sure to arise. Therefore he made himself master of the least trifles, attended to them, and looked for the inevitable results. There was no hurry about him: he went on step by step: he was content to wait. There was veracity in the man and in all he did. He was thoroughly honest—and it is the want of honesty which is so deplorably felt in the public men of the present day. There was no more veracious man in Britain than he.

"Wellington took the materials given him, Carlyle said, and made the best of them; he knew the officers were ignoramuses, blockheads;

—he saw the shortcomings of others, but he said if I cannot get better materials I must take them, and make the most of them.

"Talked of General Burgoyne (in the American war): he said it was impossible a General in Friedrich's army would have acted so. A Prussian army would have cut its way through the enemy rather than surrender.

"He abused Parliaments, and the talk and rant and speechifying, and the publication of the same in the newspapers; laughed at what the press and the public had said about the soldier's dress. They abused the stock: 'Why, a stock was most comfortable; the best neck-covering a soldier could wear. He always wore a stock.' He on his part did not see why soldiers were not to wear stocks. He resented indignantly the interference of the press in such matters.

"As he spoke of everything being perfect in Friedrich's army,—their marching, their drill, their dress, their arms, I said that with regard to their dress and system, both had been found troublesome to the soldier, and ridiculously pedantic. He said he never heard that there was any sane man who had yet found fault with the dress of Friedrich's troops, nor with the drill. In short, he considers any system which differs from Friedrich's good for nothing.

"Parliament, the press, the English army, he abused royally, but in language so quaint, so droll, so unlike anything I ever heard before, that once or twice I burst out laughing, though it was evident he saw nothing humorous or out of the way in his expressions. One thing was evident, his detestation of any and every thing approaching dishonesty or inconsistency. Another was his utter appreciation of conscientious work; not work slurred over to serve a purpose irrespective of time.

"He is full of humour, but he does not seem to know it is humour, for he goes on gravely, as though the humorous thoughts were merely strict reasoning.

"Asked him if he had heard —— read? No, he did not care to hear anyone read aloud. He did not like it. He had only heard one person read to please him; that was Mrs. Fry, in Newgate. 'There were the poor unfortunate outcasts opposite to her, looking and laughing as though they were the world, and all the rest was nothing; and there she, the wonderful creature, calmly and quietly took out the Bible, and began reading to them the history of Martha, and she read in a way that showed she understood it, had thought it over, and knew perfectly well all about it. She made

you understand it *all*:—all the meanings, and all the bearings. She had a good voice, but it was not that so much as the earnestness of the creature, and her sincerity. And it had its effect, for the women were quiet and listened. There Mrs. Fry stood among them, in her quaker dress, clean and neat, and calm and strong, in her own persuasion of the righteousness of her work; and there were some other cleanly-dressed creatures about her—quakers they were too, I believe; and altogether it was a wonderful sight. I have never seen the like of it. But ——, I don't want to hear him. I had much rather not. With my own two eyes I can follow the lines of a book much faster than he can read, and it is that I want to do to get through a book.'

"Leigh Hunt's reading he liked. He was once obliged to hear him read something—for what he read had not been printed—a play of his, and that too he liked.'

"He said that when a young man he had had great hopes for German literature, but they had been deceived. All was going and had gone downwards. There was a sort of radicalism rampant everywhere. All had degenerated into newspapers and Parliaments. The aristocratic spirit which showed so prominently in Goethe was no longer to be found. Spoke of Heine.

One thing he thought he discovered in him, a stern, grim sort of humour, but still, more than he had seen generally in Germans. A Jew, he said, never laughed a hearty, outbursting laugh. I told him Mrs. Austin once met Heine at Boulogne when she was a child, and he said, 'Now you can say you have seen Heinrich Heine!' She said, 'Who is Heinrich Heine?' which seemed to amuse him greatly, for he burst out into a hearty laugh; showing that, at all events, he was no Jew.

"He should not go to Germany again; as long as he was there he could get nothing fit for a Christian man to eat—no bed big enough to sleep in. The bedsteads always too short, and like a trough. Once, to his surprise, the mattrass was too long for the bed, and so he lay all night with it arched like a saddle in the middle. There were no curtains, and in the hotels people stamped overhead, and tramped past his door all night. He had not slept all the seven weeks he was in Germany, and felt the worse for it, he verily believed, up to the present day.

"Talked of soldiers' marching. Of course he asserted that the Prussians marched best of any troops. I told him the Spaniards were good marchers, and spoke of their foot-covering. When I told him of the value of good shoes,

roomy and strong, and of their being well greased to make the leather supple, he seemed to enter into the matter with zest. He evidently knew the value of a greased shoe. 'Well rubbed in,' he said, 'till the leather is soft and proof against water. That is the thing.' I said much of the success of an army depended, more than was generally thought, on their foot-covering. He said it was very probable.

"Carlyle's long, wild, grey hair, hangs over his forehead. His eye is bright and lively,—his complexion healthy, and his look generally betokens a man who leads a *calm* life, not mixing in the struggle and rush going on around him. His wife told me she took in the *Daily Telegraph*, in order to know what was going on in the world. Her husband never reads the papers. He speaks slowly, and as if what he says were well weighed beforehand, as if all had been thoroughly thought over long ago. His way of stating his opinions shows that there is not a shadow of doubt in his mind as to their correctness. He makes you feel, too, he has no thought of changing his views, or allowing himself to be influenced by aught another may say. His mind is made up, once and for ever."*

* Memoirs and Letters of Charles Boner, Author of *Chamois Hunting in Bavaria*, &c. Edited by Rosa Mackenzie Kettle. London: Bentley and Sons, 1871, vol. ii. pp. 5-11.

The Third Volume of *Friedrich* was published in May of this year (1862). It was a few days before or after the Christmas of 1862–63 (probably in the early days of January 1863) that the present writer first ventured to introduce himself personally to Carlyle, and had the privilege of accompanying him on a morning stroll in the Chelsea districts—a circumstance to be further and more fully described in a later stage of this narrative.

The author's first introduction to Carlyle.

By the kindness of the accomplished and amiable gentleman to whom it is addressed, we are enabled to insert the following letter of Carlyle to a friend and correspondent at Manchester. The first part of the letter refers, as the reader will see, to two portraits of Emerson which Mr. Ireland had sent to Carlyle, and the remainder to a forged and spurious work, entitled *Matinées Royales*, attributed to Frederick the Great, the resuscitation of which infamous and malignant falsehood had naturally aroused much wrathful indignation in the breast of his English historian.

Letter to Mr. Alexander Ireland.

"Chelsea, 18th March 1863.

"DEAR IRELAND,

"I am glad to hear of you again; and much obliged for those two portraits of

Emerson. The painted one I cannot endure; but the actual shadow by *the sun* (who aims at nothing but the truth) is beautiful and really interesting to me. Wonderfully little *oldened*; has got a *black wig*, I see; nothing else changed!

To Alexander Ireland.

"Two or three weeks ago a Mr. Doeg forwarded me a clipping from your newspaper (I think, yours); some letter from somebody, about a wonderful self-condemnatory manuscript by Frederick the Great, gathered at Berlin by some Duc de Rovigo, for the endless gratitude of the curious. I had not heard of the monstrous platitude at all till then, but guessed then what it would be,—an *old* acquaintance of mine, truly a thrice-brutal stupidity, which has had red-hot pokers indignantly run through it about ten times, but always revives and steps forth afresh, with new tap of the parish-drum; there being no 'parish' in the universe richer in prurient darkness and flunkey malevolence than ours is! I set Neuberg* upon it in the *Athenæum*; but know not what he has made of it. No Editor, in my time, has crowned himself with such a pair of ears as he of the Williams-and-Norgate periodical. It is a clear fact, though not clear in England, that here is the *most* brutish of moon-

* The German translator of *Friedrich*.

calves lately heard of in any country; that to have one moment's belief, or doubt, on such a subject is to make affidavit that your knowledge of Friedrich and his affairs is zero and *less*. Would to Heaven I *were* 'done with them!' I never in my life was held in such hurry,—to last six months yet.

"Yours ever,
"T. CARLYLE."

It is a curious circumstance, and characteristic of the deep and noble humanity of his nature, that among the most beautiful of Carlyle's letters that have hitherto come to light are the letters of condolence and sympathy on the death of some dear and loved one. The following was written to Sir George Sinclair on receiving the intelligence of the death of his wife, Lady Camilla Sinclair, who had been Carlyle's hostess some three years before on his visit to Thurso Castle:—

"Chelsea, April 15, 1863.

"DEAR SIR,

"We read in the newspapers, with a lively sympathy, the announcement of what had come upon you. It is a heavy blow and a very sorrowful: the parting with a loved soul who has been your companion so long through good and evil; who

To Sir George Sinclair.

was such a bright being when you first found her,—and has had to fade away under many sufferings and sorrows, which you have shared with her, and leave you alone for the remainder of the pilgrimage. It is 'the way of all the earth;' yes, and has been since man was first made. And yet there is a strange *originality* in it to every one of us, when it comes upon him in its course. I grieve to think how sad you are. I myself remember the good Lady and her very great goodness to me while herself so heavy-laden; and the thought that I shall never see her again is painful and pathetic to me. Words are very idle, so are wishes: I will say no more on the subject. Time, by degrees, smoothes away the first asperities; then Death has a kind of bland aspect, most sad, but also most sacred: the one haven appointed for us all.

"I am still kept overwhelmingly busy here; my strength slowly diminishing, my work progressing still more slowly,—my heart really almost broken. In some six or eight months,—surely not longer than eight,—I hope to have at last done: it will be the gladdest day I have seen for ten years back, pretty much the one glad day! I have still half a volume to do, still a furious struggle, and *tour-de-force*, as there have been many, to wind matters up reasonably in

half a volume. But this is the *last*, if I can but do it; and if health hold out in any fair measure, I always hope I can.

"Your pamphlet on Napoleon has never come. I am happy to agree entirely in what you say about that renowned Corsican gentleman ("play-actor pirate," who after all found dishonesty *not* the best policy), and about his sham synonym of these present times, whom I still more heartily dissent from, and even take the liberty of despising.* Probably nothing can be written

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* In one of his talks with Mr. Milburn, Carlyle being asked "Did you ever happen to see Louis Napoleon while he lived in London?" made answer in his most characteristic manner:—"Oh yes, I chanced to meet him a few times at the houses of people who were accustomed to give dinners here; and I thought that there was even then something lurking in him of the blood of the old Napoleon, who was, as I read it, the great Highwayman of history; his habit being to clutch King or Kaiser by the throat, and swear by the Eternal, 'If you don't stand and deliver instantly, I'll blow your brains out.' A profitable trade he did at this sort of thing, until another man—Arthur Duke of Wellington by name—succeeded in clutching *him*, and there was an end of him.

Napoleon III.

"This Louis Napoleon, as he is called, used to talk to me about the Spirit of the Age, the Democratic Spirit, and the Progress of the Species; but, for my own part, it seemed that the only progress the species was making was backward, and that the spirit of the age was leading the people downward; and we discovered that we didn't understand each other's language; that we had no key in common for our dialects. And we parted asunder—as may-hap did Abraham and Lot—each going his several ways. It looks to me very much as if *his* way led him to Sodom.

"After that, I used to see him in this neighbourhood (I think he had lodgings in this part of the town), with his hands folded across his breast, and his eyes fixed with a melancholy stare upon the ground, and he looked to me like a poor opera-singer in search of an engagement. God knows he has succeeded in find-

upon them that will do much good. There is such an outpouring of disloyal platitudes, and vocal jackassery, of every figure, in these times, as quite disgusts one with the pen, and almost with the tongue itself.

"Farewell, dear sir; may your pious heart soon compose itself, and be able to say,—what Wisdom has, in all dialects, prescribed since Wisdom first was,—'Good is the will of the Lord.'

"Yours ever truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

"The American Iliad in a Nut-Shell."

To an unfortunate and inopportune utterance of Carlyle's on the great American struggle between North and South, to which he was ill-advised enough to give vent in the pages of a well-known magazine, then edited by his friend David Masson,* we shall do no more than allude. Carlyle himself had the perspicacity and ingenu-

ing an engagement upon a stage sufficiently vast, before an audience ample enough for any man, and the whole thing got up regardless of expense. But I certainly expect that the day will come when the blue sulphurous flames will dart from behind the scenes and consume the pile with all that are in it; or that the edifice will give way in a crash of ruin, and the whole—singer, audience, and all—sink into the nethermost depths of uttermost perdition, where, it seems to me, they certainly belong."

* *Ilias (Americana) in Nuce. The American Iliad in a Nutshell.* By Thomas Carlyle.—Printed in *Macmillan's Magazine*, August 1863 (vol. viii. p. 301).

ousness at a later time, when fuller light dawned on him on the matter, to admit that at least his view of it might have been imperfect and one-sided: he had many valued friends among Americans: and he made a noble *amende honorable* for his momentary error of judgment, in the bequest of his collection of Historical Works relating to Cromwell and Friedrich to Harvard College, Massachusetts.

Completion of *Friedrich.*

The fourth volume of the History of Friedrich appeared in February 1864, and the fifth and sixth (completing the work) in March 1865. Carlyle had thus, on the verge of his seventieth year, successfully accomplished the last great labour of his literary life, on which he had spent thirteen years of toil, drudgery, confinement and enforced exclusion from social intercourse.

CHAPTER VII.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS AS RECTOR OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY.

It would be a mistake, however, to speak or to think of Carlyle as a recluse. He was not a man who held himself in isolation, except for work's sake. He was ever accessible not only to those who came to him with formal introductions, but to many who trusted merely to his good nature to answer their letters or to grant them interviews. He had a keen delight in the society of worthy persons, and by habitual contact with men of the most varied characters and opinions he 'kept touch' with the world, and avoided all those crudities of thought into which the solitary scholar is sure ultimately to drift. On the other hand he undoubtedly did not identify himself with any of the 'movements' of his

Carlyle not a recluse.

time; neither was he wont to appear prominently upon public occasions. His position as a thinker and a scholar, as well as his natural bent of mind, bound him rather to the study than the forum.

Carlyle's most prominent public appearance was on the occasion of his installation as Rector of Edinburgh University; and we now propose to lay before the reader an account of that event and of the proceedings connected with it.

Rectorship of Edinburgh University.

The office of Rector of the University of Edinburgh is not an ancient one. It dates from so recent a period as the amendment of the Constitution of the University in 1858. In that year Lord Advocate Inglis's Act gave the University a Lord Chancellor and a Lord Rector—the latter being elected by the matriculated students of the University. The practical benefit of these offices to the University seems to be inconsiderable enough; but whatever duties might or might not devolve on their bearers, that of delivering an address to the members of the University in the largest obtainable hall could not be set aside. The delivery of this speech seems to have now become the chief duty of both Chancellor and Rector. Some formal duties attach to the office of Rector, such as

that of presiding over the University Court; but they are merely nominal. The speech is the great thing; and that in itself is important enough. The chief value of these offices, however, really lies in the opportunity that they give to two sections of members of the University, the graduates and the matriculated students, of paying honour to any man whom they may regard as having deserved well either of his country or of his University. This newly-conferred privilege was immediately seized upon by the General Council, consisting mainly of University graduates and matriculated students, as an occasion for yielding homage to two very remarkable men. The General Council elected as its first Chancellor the venerable Lord Brougham, then nearing the close of his busy life; and the choice was apt, not only by reason of the homage which it enabled the Northern University to pay to a man of mark and weight, but on account of the veteran lawyer's connexion with Edinburgh and the *Edinburgh Review*. In electing Lord Brougham as its head it was felt that the General Council, as befitted its composition and its position of seniority in the University, was paying tribute to the past rather than the present; and the sense of the fitness of things was further satis-

Lord Brougham.

fied when, as their first Rector, the younger students elected in 1859 so fervid an exponent of latter-day opinions as Mr. Gladstone. The office of Chancellor is held for life, that of Rector for a term of three years. For the proper fulfilment of each office a speech must be delivered, and both of the candidates first chosen complied with this condition. Lord Brougham delivered an address shortly after his election, and Mr. Gladstone gave one on his installation. In 1862, at the end of his first term of office, Mr. Gladstone was re-elected Rector, and held office for another three years, up to November 1865. At the close of the second term, on November 3rd, he delivered a farewell oration, of considerable length, on "The Place of Ancient Greece in the Providential Order of the World." With this valedictory outburst of noble eloquence, Mr. Gladstone demitted office, and the students had to choose a successor. Two candidates were proposed and nominated—Thomas Carlyle and the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli. By the regulations of the University the Rector is elected on the second Saturday after the commencement of the Winter Session, and in the year 1865 that day fell upon November 11th. There were thus eight days

Mr. Gladstone the first Rector.

Mr. Gladstone re-elected.

for the two Committees to put forward the claims of their respective candidates. The controversy into which the students dragged his name must have been exceedingly distasteful to Carlyle, and doubly so when it is remembered whose claims were pitted against his own. For the remarkable and distinguished Conservative statesman, whose death followed so closely upon his own, Carlyle never entertained any feeling of respect, hardly even of toleration; and his published utterances on the character of the late Lord Beaconsfield approach, if they do not transgress, the utmost limits allowable even in political controversy. It can hardly, therefore, have been without a certain feeling of annoyance that Carlyle found himself thus suddenly placed in direct personal antagonism to Mr. Disraeli; and the manner in which the students conducted the contest must have added to the unpleasantness of the situation. No sooner had Mr. Gladstone demitted office than the supporters of the rival candidates set to work in earnest. Meetings were held in quick succession, manifestoes issued, and lampoons circulated. The whole proceedings had much the air of a Parliamentary election on a small scale, conducted without any of the modern amenities. The only method

Mr. Disraeli proposed.

the students of either party could devise, to exalt the character and claims of their own candidate, was to vilify and decry those of their opponents'. And this mode of controversy was pushed to its extreme. The most charitable construction to put upon their speeches is that they regarded the struggle as having solely a political bearing, and were willing to resort to any methods to secure the return of their own candidate.

But, after all, the students who talked this silly nonsense were in a small minority. The election took place on Saturday 11th November 1865, when Carlyle was returned by an overwhelming majority. The *Scotsman* in a leading article thus speaks of the victory :—

Carlyle chosen Rector.

"Thomas Carlyle has been chosen Rector by a majority unprecedented in the brief history of such contests in Edinburgh. . . . Out of 967 students voting, Mr. Disraeli charmed only 310, Mr. Carlyle having 310 to set against the votes for his opponent, and 347 over and above of clear majority. There is reason to believe that the majority would have been even more overwhelming, but for some hitch in the matter of enrolment of certain of the classes; the number of students voting having been from 150

to 200 less than voted in each of the two former contests in which Mr. Gladstone was victorious. But even as things were, Mr. Carlyle's majority was thrice that attained by Mr. Gladstone over Lord Neaves—a candidate with strong local, utilitarian and classical claims to the favour of the constituency; and twice that attained in his second contest by Mr. Gladstone over Mr. Stirling—a scholar of no mean fame, and a politician of no common character and place."*

Thus closed the most exciting rectorial contest that had been carried on at Edinburgh, and the next step was to obtain Carlyle's acceptance of the honour so enthusiastically thrust upon him. It was known that he had refused a similar honour offered to him by the students of Glasgow and Aberdeen, and that he was still suffering from the effects of his excessive application to the great historical work he had lately completed. The satisfaction, therefore, was universal when it was announced that the illustrious writer had not rejected the request of his Alma Mater, that he had accepted the office of Rector, and would deliver the address in the following spring.

The office accepted.

* *Scotsman*, Saturday, November 18, 1865.

Monday, the 2nd of April 1866, was the day fixed for the new Rector's appearance before his constituency, and on the preceding Thursday he left London in company with Professor Tyndall, who accompanied him to Edinburgh to receive the honorary degree of LL.D. from the Senatus. They broke the journey at York, whence they proceeded to Frystone Hall, near Pontefract, the residence of Lord Houghton. Leaving that hospitable mansion on Saturday, Mr. Carlyle and his companion proceeded direct to Edinburgh, where they arrived by the mail-train on Sunday morning. At Edinburgh Carlyle had been invited to become the guest of the Lord Provost, but declined on account of the feeble state of his health, which would not permit him to enter to any great extent into public or official life. He declined also an invitation from the Marquis and Marchioness of Lothian to stay with them at Newbattle Abbey, and elected instead to be the guest, during his stay in Edinburgh, of his old friend Thomas Erskine of Linlathen. Erskine was a remarkable man. He was one of the earliest pioneers of the new religious development of which Frederick Maurice was the chief exponent in England; he was an eloquent

Carlyle's journey North.

Mr. Erskine of Linlathen.

writer, and a man of almost saintly life. With Carlyle he had long been on terms of friendliness.

The installation of the new Rector was an event of no little importance in the northern capital. It was made the occasion by the Senatus for the bestowal of degrees on all sorts of people, and Edinburgh, at the time, was quite full of notabilities. Mr. Erskine was one of those who received an LL.D., and he modestly expressed his belief that the fact of Carlyle being his guest, whilst he was in Edinburgh for the purpose of being installed Lord Rector of the University, was the chief reason of his being honoured with the degree.* A similar degree was offered to the Rector himself, but declined by him on the ground that it might cause confusion if there were two Dr. Carlyles. The Rectorial Address was delivered in the Music Hall, in George Street, a building capable under pressure of holding 2,000 persons. Long before the 2nd of April there had been over 4,000 applications for tickets of admission. The proceedings of the day have been so well described by an eloquent and gifted eye-witness, that we cannot do better than reproduce his

* *Letters of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen.* Edited by William Hanna, D.D. Edinburgh, 1877. Vol. ii. p. 187.

words :—"Curious stories are told of the eagerness on every side manifested to hear Mr. Carlyle. Country clergymen from beyond Aberdeen came into Edinburgh for the sole purpose of hearing and seeing. Gentlemen came down from London by train the night before, and returned to London by train the night after. Nay, it was even said that an enthusiast dwelling in the remote West of Ireland intimated to the officials who had charge of the distribution that if a ticket should be reserved for him he would gladly come the whole way to Edinburgh. Let us hope a ticket *was* reserved. On the day of the Address the doors of the Music-Hall were besieged long before the hour of opening had arrived; and loitering about there on the outskirts of the crowd, one could not help glancing curiously down Pitt Street, towards the 'lang toun' of Kirkcaldy, dimly seen beyond the Forth;—for on the sands there, in the early years of the century, Edward Irving was accustomed to pace up and down solitarily, and 'as if the sands were his own,' people say, who remember, when they were boys, seeing the tall, ardent, black-haired, swift-gestured, squinting man, often enough. And to Kirkcaldy too, came young Carlyle. . . . It seemed to me that so glancing Fife-wards, and

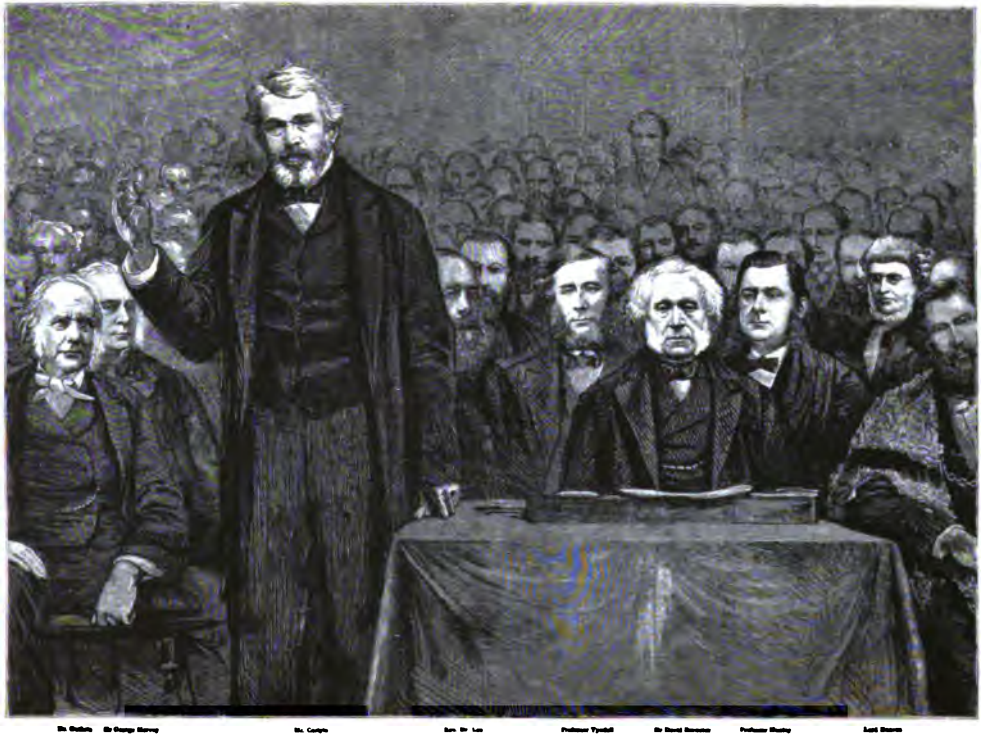
Alexander Smith's account of Carlyle's installation as Rector.

thinking of that noble friendship,—of the David and Jonathan of so many years gone,—was the best preparation for the man I was to see and the speech I was to hear. In a very few minutes after the doors were opened the Large Hall was filled in every part, and when up the central passage the Principal, the Lord Rector, the Members of the Senate, and other gentlemen advanced towards the platform, the cheering was vociferous and hearty. The Principal, of course, occupied the chair, the Lord Rector being on his right, and the Lord Provost on his left. Every eye was fixed on the Rector. To all appearance, as he sat, time and labour had dealt tenderly with him. His face had not yet lost the country bronze which he had brought up with him from Dumfriesshire as a student fifty-six years ago. His long residence in London had not touched his Annandale look, nor had it —as we soon learned—touched his Annandale accent. His countenance was striking, homely, sincere, truthful—the countenance of a man on whom 'the burden of this unintelligible world' had weighed more heavily than on most. His hair was yet almost dark; his moustache and short beard were iron-grey. His eyes were wide, melancholy, sorrowful; and seemed as if they had been at times a-weary of the sun. Alto-

gether in his aspect there was something aboriginal, as of a piece of unhewn granite, which had never been polished to any approved pattern, whose natural and original vitality had never been tampered with. In a word, there seemed no passivity about Mr. Carlyle—he was the diamond, and the world was his pane of glass; he was a graving-tool rather than a thing graven upon: a man to set his mark on the world; a man on whom the world could not set *its* mark. And just as, glancing towards Fife a few minutes before, one could not help thinking of his early connexion with Edward Irving, so seeing him sit beside the venerable Principal of the University, one could not help thinking of his earliest connexion with literature.

"Time brings men into the most unexpected relationships. When the Principal was plain Mr. Brewster, editor of the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, little dreaming that he should ever be Knight of Hanover and head of the Northern Metropolitan University, Mr. Carlyle—just as little dreaming that he should be the foremost man of letters of his day and Lord Rector of the same University—was one of his contributors, writing for the said Encyclopædia biographies of Montesquieu and and other notables. And so it came

Carlyle's installation as Rector.



Sir Gabriel Sir George Harvey Mr. Carlyle Rev. Dr Lee Professor Tyndall Sir David Brewster Professor Huxley Lord Stanley

MR. CARLYLE DELIVERING THE ADDRESS ON HIS INSTALLATION AS LORD RECTOR OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY, APRIL 2, 1866

about that after years of separation and of honourable labour, the old editor and his contributor were brought together again—under new aspects.

"The proceedings began by the conferring of the degree of LL.D. on Mr. Erskine of Lin lathen, an old friend of Mr. Carlyle's; on Professors Huxley, Tyndall, and Ramsay, and on Dr. Rae, the Arctic explorer. That done, amid a tempest of cheering and hats enthusiastically waved, Mr. Carlyle, slipping off his Rectorial robe (which must have been a very shirt of Nessus to him), advanced to the table, and began to speak in low, wavering, melancholy tones, which were in accord with the melancholy eyes, and in the Annandale accent with which his playfellows must have been familiar long ago. So self-contained was he, so impregnable to outward influences, that all his years of Edinburgh and London life could not impair, even in the slightest degree, *that*.

The Inaugural Address.

"The opening sentences were lost in the applause. What need of quoting a speech which has been read by everybody? Appraise it as you please, it was a thing *per se*. Just as, if you wish a purple dye you must fish up the murex; if

you wish ivory you must go to the east; so if you desire an address such as Edinburgh listened to that day, you must go to Chelsea for it. It may not be quite to your taste, but, in any case, there is no other intellectual warehouse in which that kind of article is kept in stock.

"The gratitude I owe to him is, or should be equal to that of most. He has been to me only a voice, sometimes sad, sometimes wrathful, sometimes scornful; and when I saw him for the first time with the eye of the flesh stand up amongst us the other day, and heard him speak kindly, brotherly, affectionate words—his first appearance of that kind, I suppose, since he discoursed of 'Heroes and Hero-worship' to the London people,—I am not ashamed to confess that I felt moved towards him, as I do not think in any possible combination of circumstances I could have felt moved towards any other living man."*

The procession which accompanied Carlyle to the platform included many men of world-wide, some of merely local fame. Among others may be named Sir David Brewster, Principal and Vice-Chancellor; Mr. Erskine of Linlathen, Pro-

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* "Mr. Carlyle at Edinburgh." By Alexander Smith. *The Argosy: a Magazine.* Lond., Strahan & Co., May 1866 (vol. i. pp. 504-510).

fessor Huxley, Dr. Rae, Professor Ramsay, and Professor Tyndall, Elect Doctors of Law; Sir William Stirling Maxwell, Bart., M.P.; Sir D. Baxter, Bart.; Lord Neaves; Professor Shairp, St. Andrews; Professor Bain, London; Professors Sir James Simpson, Bart., Syme, Playfair, Blackie, Masson, and Mr. Gibson, Chairman of Mr. Carlyle's Committee. The attendance also included Dr. Carlyle, Mr. Moncure Conway, and other personal friends of the Rector.

The Secretary of Mr. Carlyle's Committee, introduced the Lord Rector in the following words:—"Mr. Vice-Chancellor, in the name of the students of this University I present to you Mr. Carlyle as the Rector whom we have chosen. It would be strange indeed if we were to omit from the list of those whom we wish to honour, our University's most distinguished son, the foremost of living Scotchmen. More than fifty years ago he was a student in our class-rooms, and now we rejoice that it has been our good fortune to bring him back to you, and to give to him the highest of all the honours we have to bestow. I beg you will install him as our Lord Rector."

We subjoin another account of the proceedings, written by the Edinburgh correspondent of

a London journal, which supplements, in some particulars, the one already quoted:—"A vast interest among the intelligent public has been excited by the prospect of Mr. Carlyle's appearance to be installed as Rector of the University of Edinburgh. With the exception of the delivery of his Lectures on Heroes and Hero-Worship, &c., he has avoided oratory; and to many of his admirers the present occasion seemed likely to afford their only chance of ever seeing him in the flesh, and hearing his living voice. The result has been that the University authorities have been beset by applications in number altogether unprecedented—to nearly all of which they could only give the reluctant answer, that admission for strangers was impossible. The students who elected Mr. Carlyle received tickets, if they applied within the specified time, and the members of the University Council, or graduates, obtained the residue according to priority of application. Ladies' tickets to the number of one hundred and fifty were issued, each Professor obtaining four, and the remaining thirty being placed at the disposal of Sir David Brewster, the Principal. And the one hundred and fifty lucky ladies were conspicuous in the front of the gallery to-day, having been ad-

Another account.

mitted before the doors for students and other males were open.

"The hour appointed for letting them in was kept precisely—it was half-past one p.m., but an hour before it, despite occasional showers of rain, a crowd had begun to gather at the front door of the Music-Hall, and at the opening of the door it had gathered to proportions sufficient to fill half the building, its capacity under severe crushing being about two thousand.

"When the door was opened, they rushed in as crowds of young men only can and dare rush, and up the double stairs they streamed like a torrent; which torrent, however, policemen and check-gates soon moderated. I chanced to fall into a lucky current of the crowd, and got in amongst the first two or three hundred, and got forward to the fourth seat from the platform, as good a place for seeing and hearing as any.

"The proceedings of the day were fixed to commence at two p.m., and the half-hour of waiting was filled up by the students in throwing occasional volleys of peas, whistling *en masse* various lively tunes, and in clambering, like small escalading parties, on to and over the platform to take advantage of the seats in the organ gallery behind. For Edinburgh students, however, let me say that these proceedings were

singularly decorous. They did indulge in a little fun when nothing else was doing, but they did not come for that alone. Any student who wanted fun could have sold his ticket at a handsome profit, for which better fun could be had elsewhere. I heard among the crowd that some students had got so high a price as a guinea each for their tickets, and I heard of others who had been offered no less but had refused it. And I must say further, that they listened to Mr. Carlyle's address with as much attention and reverence as they could have bestowed on a prophet;—only I daresay most prophets would have elicited less applause and laughter.

"Shortly before two, the city magistrates and a few other personages mounted the platform, and, with as much quietness as the fancy of the students directed, took the seats which had been marked out for them by large red pasteboard tickets. At two precisely the students in the organ gallery started to the tops of the seats and began to cheer vociferously, and almost instantly all the audience followed their example. The procession was on its way through the hall, and in half a minute Lord Provost Chambers, in his official robes, mounted the platform stair; then Principal Sir David Brewster

and the Lord Rector, Mr. Carlyle, both in their gold-laced robes of office; then the Rev. Dr. Lee, and the other professors in their gowns; also the LL.D.'s to be, in black gowns. Lord Neaves and Dr. Guthrie were there in an LL.D.'s black gown and blue ribbons; Mr. Harvey, the President of the Royal Scottish Academy, and Sir D. Baxter, Bart. — men conspicuous in their ordinary garb.

"Dr. Lee offered up a prayer of a minute and a half, at the 'Amen' of which I could see Mr. Carlyle bow very low. Then the business of the occasion commenced. A tall, thin, pale-faced, beardless, acute, composed-looking young gentleman, in an M.A.'s gown—introduced Mr. Carlyle, 'the most distinguished son of the University,' to the Principal, Sir David Brewster, as the Lord Rector elected by the students. Sir David saluted him as such, thinking, perhaps, of the time when Thomas Carlyle, then an unknown young man, wrote articles for his 'Encyclopædia,' and got his name to introduce to public notice a translation of Legendre's 'Geometry.' Next Professor Muirhead, Dean of the Faculty of Laws in the University, introduced various gentlemen to the Principal in order, as persons whom the Senate had thought worthy of the degree of LL.D. There

was Mr. Erskine, of Linlathen, Mr. Carlyle's host for the time being, and often previously, an old friend of Irving and Chalmers, himself the writer of various religious books, and one of the best and most amiable of men. If intelligent goodness ever entitled anyone to the degree of LL.D., he certainly deserves it; nor do I insinuate that on grounds of pure intellect he is not well entitled to the honour. He is now nearer eighty than seventy years of age*—a mild-looking full-eyed old man, with a face somewhat of the type of the late Lord Derby's. There was Professor Huxley, young in years, dark, heavy browed, alert and resolute, but not moulded after any high ideal; and there was Professor Tyndall, also young, lithe of limb, and nonchalant in manner. When his name was called he sat as if he had no concern in what was going on, and then rose with an easy smile, partly of modesty, but in great measure of indifference.

"Dr. Rae, the Arctic explorer and first discoverer of the fate of Sir John Franklin, who is an M.D. of Edinburgh, was now made LL.D. He is of tall, wiry, energetic figure, slightly

* Mr. Erskine was then in his seventy-eighth year, having been born 13th October 1788. He died 20th March, 1870.—Ed.

baldish, with greyish, curly hair, keen handsome face, high crown and sloping forehead, and his bearing is that of a soldier—of a man who has both given and obeyed commands, and been drilled to stand steady and upright. Carlyle himself was offered the degree of LL.D., but he declined the honour, laughing it off, in fact, in a letter, with such excuses as that he had a brother a Dr. Carlyle (an M.D., also a man of talent, I insert parenthetically, and known in literature as a translator of Dante), and that if two Dr. Carlyles should appear at the gates of Paradise, mistakes might arise.

"After all the LL.D.'s had heard their merits enumerated, and had had a black hood or wallet of some kind, with a blue ribbon conspicuous in it, flung over their heads, Principal Brewster announced that the Lord Rector would now deliver his address. Thereupon Mr. Carlyle rose at once, shook himself out of his gold-laced rectorial gown, left it on his chair, and stepped quietly to the table, and drawing his tall, bony frame into a position of straight perpendicularity not possible to one man in five hundred at seventy years of age, he began to speak quietly and distinctly, but nervously. There was a slight flush on his face, but he bore himself with composure and dignity, and in the course of half-an-

hour he was obviously beginning to feel at his ease, so far at least as to have adequate command over the current of his thought.

"He spoke on quite freely and easily, hardly ever repeated a word, never looked at a note, and only once returned to finish up a topic from which he had deviated. He apologised for not having come with a written discourse. It was usual, and 'it would have been more comfortable to me just at present,' but he had tried it, and could not satisfy himself, and 'as the spoken word comes from the heart,' he had resolved to try that method. I do not think I ever heard any address that I should be so unwilling to blot from my memory. Not that there was much in it that cannot be found in his writings, or inferred from them; but the manner of the man was a key to the writings, and for naturalness and quiet power, I have never seen anything to compare with it. He did not deal in rhetoric. He talked—it was continuous, strong, quiet talk—like a patriarch about to leave the world to the young lads who had chosen him and were just entering it. His voice is a soft, downy voice—not a tone in it is of the shrill, fierce kind that one would expect it to be in reading the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*.

"There was not a trace of effort, of affecta-

tion, or even of extravagance. Shrewd common sense there was in abundance. There was the involved disrupted style also, but it looked so natural that reflection was needed to recognise in it that very style which purists find to be un-English and unintelligible. Over the angles of this disrupted style rolled out a few cascades of humour—quite as if by accident. He let them go, talking on in his soft, downy accents, without a smile; occasionally for an instant looking very serious, with his dark eyes beating like pulses, but generally looking merely composed and kindly, and, so to speak, father-like. He concluded by reciting his own translation of a poem of Goethe—

"'The future hides in it gladness and sorrow.'

And this he did in a style of melancholy grandeur not to be described, but still less to be forgotten. It was then alone that the personality of the philosopher and poet were revealed continuously in his manner of utterance. The features of his face are familiar to all from his portraits. But I do not think any portrait, unless, perhaps, Woolner's medallion, gives full expression to the resolution that is visible in his face. Besides, they all make him look sadder and older than he appears. Although threescore

and ten, his hair is still abundant and tolerably black, and there is considerable colour in his cheek."

The correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote:—"I have never heard a speech of whose more remarkable qualities so few can be conveyed on paper. You will read of 'applause' and 'laughter'; but you will little realise the eloquent blood flaming up the speaker's cheek, the kindling of his eye, or the inexpressible voice and look when the drolleries were coming out. When he spoke of clap-trap books exciting astonishment 'in the minds of foolish persons,' the evident halting at the word '*fools*,' and the smoothing of his hair, as if he must be decorous, which preceded the change to 'foolish persons,' were exceedingly comical. As for the flaming bursts, they took shape in grand tones, whose impression was made deeper, not by raising, but by lowering the voice. Your correspondent here declares that he should hold it worth his coming all the way from London in the rain in the Sunday night train were it only to have heard Carlyle say, 'There is a nobler ambition than the gaining of all California, or the getting of all the suffrages that are on the planet just now!' In the first few minutes of the address there was some hesitation, and much of the shrinking that

one might expect in a secluded scholar; but these very soon cleared away, and during the larger part, and to the close of the oration, it was evident that he was receiving a sympathetic influence from his listeners, which he did not fail to return tenfold. The applause became less frequent; the silence became that of a woven spell; and the recitation of the beautiful lines from Goethe, at the end, was so masterly —so marvellous—that one felt in it that Carlyle's real anathemas against rhetoric were but the expression of his knowledge that there is a rhetoric beyond all other arts."

In describing his visit to Carlyle in 1833, Emerson remarks, in a passage already quoted* —" Carlyle was a man from his youth, an author who did not need to hide from his readers, and as absolute a man of the world, unknown and exiled on that hill-farm, as if holding on his own terms what is best in London." The truth of this early judgment on Carlyle is shown in a remarkable manner by the event in his life with which we are now dealing. It is a proof of unusual power and elasticity when a man can step at once from a literary seclusion of a quarter of a century into so prominent a public

* Vol. i. p. 123.

position, and occupy it with such brilliant success. To disciples of Carlyle this Address delivered to the Edinburgh students is one of the most valuable of his utterances. Spoken when he was in his seventy-first year, it may be regarded as the most important act and performance of the evening of his long life. It was a kind of public farewell to the public. It was a summary and reiteration of all his creed. Not a word in it was new. There was not one single opinion expressed in it that he had not put forth in his earlier writings; yet so independent was the man that the experience of a long life had not led him to modify any of them. But though there was in the speech nothing new, the manner of it made it as fresh as if the speaker were enunciating the most startling novelties. In that, indeed, lay one part of the great genius of Carlyle. He simply went back upon the original principles of thought and elements of feeling, and renewed and quickened them from his own high inspiration. The greatness of genius is not that it says something we have never heard before; but that it stirs anew impulses which had slumbered; and the test of its reality is the answer of each heart to the call it makes. This method was strongly

The Rector's Address characterised.

illustrated in the address to the Edinburgh students. The burden of great part of it was simply this:—"Be diligent and honest in your studies; do not 'cram'; do not reckon a subject known till you have it stamped upon your mind, and can survey it intelligently from every side." But put as Carlyle put them, with the experience of a life-time behind his speech to testify to their truth, with "the eloquent blood flaming up the speaker's cheek," these commonplace precepts carried new force and new inspiration. The power of the whole address indeed was owing simply to the sincerity of the speaker. As one critic said, Carlyle produced an effect that might have been envied by a man who had spent his life in studying the art of rhetoric. And this great effect was produced by the most simple means. One of the most remarkable things about the address is the entire absence of the extravagances of style which are so characteristic of Carlyle's later writings. The associations of youth seem to have carried him back to the simplicity of his early diction. There is no personification, no mention of such abstractions as the "Immensities" and "Eternities," which figure so prominently in many of his books; everything is in the manner of a prophet laying aside

Analysis of the Address.

the mantle which he would wear on great occasions and discoursing freely to a select circle of disciples.

This friendly personal relation was established by some of the opening sentences of the address:—"There are now fifty-six years gone last November since I first entered your city, a boy of not quite fourteen—fifty-six years ago—to attend classes here and gain knowledge of all kinds, I know not what, with feelings of wonder and awe-struck expectation; and now, after a long, long course, this is what we have come to. There is something touching and tragic, and yet at the same time beautiful, to see the third generation, as it were, of my dear old native land, rising up and saying, 'Well, you are not altogether an unworthy labourer in the vineyard: you have toiled through a great variety of fortunes, and have had many judges.'" He spoke next of the difficulties of his task: said how at first he thought of writing down what he had to say and reading it out, but found "I was not accustomed to write speeches, and that I did not get on very well. So I flung that away, and resolved to trust to the inspiration of the moment," just as he did when in similar trouble with a written manuscript when delivering his first Course of Lectures in London.

Then comes the advice as to diligence in study, and a statement as to the use of Universities. Carlyle was no educational innovator. He maintained the importance of the study of the history and literature of ancient Greece and Rome; but would balance that by constant reference to and comparison with modern life. He compared the heroism of Roman days with the heroism of seventeenth-century England, declaring that he did not know where in the history of Greece or Rome there was to be found so fine a man as Oliver Cromwell. Of Knox, too, there was some hearty eulogy, and these interesting passages on endowments (especially interesting when read in the light of the Deed of Mortification, made public since his death, by which, "for the love, favour, and affection which I bear to that University, and from my interest in the advancement of education in my native Scotland, as elsewhere," Carlyle bequeaths the estate of Craigenputtoch for the endowment of "ten equal bursaries,")—"There appears to be a great demand for endowments—an assiduous and praiseworthy industry for getting new funds collected for encouraging the ingenious youth of Universities, especially in this the chief University of the country. Well, I entirely participate in everybody's approval of the move-

ment. It is very desirable. It should be responded to, and one expects most assuredly will. At least, if it is not, it will be shameful to the country of Scotland, which never was so rich in money as at the present moment, and never stood so much in need of getting noble Universities to counteract many influences that are springing up alongside of money. It should not be backward in coming forward in the way of endowments—at least, in rivalry to our rude old barbarous ancestors, as we have been pleased to call them. Such munificence as theirs is beyond all praise, to whom I am sorry to say we are not yet by any manner of means equal or approaching equality. There is an overabundance of money, and sometimes I cannot help thinking that, probably, never has there been at any other time in Scotland the hundredth part of the money that now is, or even the thousandth part, for wherever I go there is that gold-nuggeting—that prosperity. Many men are counting their balances by millions. Money was never so abundant, and nothing that is good to be done with it. No man knows—or very few men know—what benefit to get out of his money. In fact, it too often is secretly a curse to him. Much better for him never to have had any. But I do not expect that

generally to be believed. Nevertheless I should think it a beautiful relief to any man that has an honest purpose struggling in him to bequeath a handsome house of refuge, so to speak, for some meritorious man who may hereafter be born into the world, to enable him a little to get on his way. To do, in fact, as those old Norman kings whom I have described to you—to raise a man out of the dirt and mud where he is getting trampled, unworthily on his part, into some kind of position where he may acquire the power to do some good in his generation. I hope that as much as possible will be done in that way; that efforts will not be relaxed till the thing is in a satisfactory state. At the same time, in regard to the classical department of things, it is to be desired that it were properly supported—that we could allow people to go and devote more leisure possibly to the cultivation of particular departments."

We will not quote any further from the Address, which is accessible enough to all who are concerned to read it. The silence, like "that of a woven spell," which fell upon the audience towards the close of it, was broken when it ended by tumultuous applause, and a crowd of enthusiastic students followed the Rector to Mr. Erskine's house. For once at any rate

popular suffrage, the despised count of heads, or count of noses, had elected a fit man. We append here an interesting account of the close of this eventful day in the life of Carlyle. It is from some reminiscences of Thomas Erskine written by Principal Shairp:—

"Among the last of the occasions on which he" (Mr. Erskine) "was allowed to receive his friends in Edinburgh was in the spring of 1866, when his old and much-valued friend Mr. Carlyle, after a long absence, revisited Edinburgh to be installed as Rector of the University. Many will still remember the wise and gracious courtesy with which he then performed the duties of hospitality, on the one hand securing for his guest the repose he needed and desired, on the other according to as many as possible the coveted privilege of meeting the sage of Chelsea. On the day on which Mr. Carlyle addressed the students in the large Music Hall, Mr. Erskine, knowing how great was the effort for a retired man of Mr. Carlyle's years, and anxious how he might feel after it was over, had asked no one to dinner for that day. When the address was well achieved, and Mr. Erskine found that Mr. Carlyle was none the worse, but rather the better for the deliverance, he asked two or three of his intimate friends to come and

join a quiet dinner-party. That evening Sir William Stirling Maxwell sat at the foot of the table, and with nice tact gave such turn to the conversation as allowed fullest scope to the sage who has praised silence so well, but fortunately does not practise it. Released from his burden, Mr. Carlyle was in excellent spirits, and discoursed in his most genial mood of his old Dumfriesshire remembrances, of the fate of James IV., and other matters of Scottish history, and of the then Emperor Napoleon, of whom, as may be imagined, he was no admirer. Those days when Mr. Erskine received Mr. Carlyle as his guest were among the last of his hospitalities in Edinburgh."

As already stated, the duties demanded from the Rector were not onerous. Carlyle while in Edinburgh, in addition to delivering his Inaugural Address, presided on the following Tuesday over a meeting of the University Court, which met to transact business in connexion with new professorial appointments. Notwithstanding his feeble health, and the fact that the weather during the early part of his stay in Edinburgh was wet and disagreeable, he

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* *Letters of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen.* Edited by William Hanna, D.D. Edinburgh, 1877, Vol. ii. pp. 373-74.

walked daily about the city; and it is affirmed that he gave some sittings to a lady sculptor.

After taking leave of Mr. Erskine and of Edinburgh, Carlyle paid a visit to Ecclefechan before returning homewards. The following letter to his late host was written from his native place:—

"Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan,
"April 17, 1866.

"Dear Mr. Erskine,

"This is almost the first day I have had any composure; and I cannot but write you a little word of gratitude, to Mrs. Stirling and you, for your cordial reception of me in my late shipwrecked state, and your unwearied patience with me, during the whole of the late adventure.

"Now that is all comfortably over, and a thing to look thankfully back upon, there is no feature of it prettier to me than that your kind chamber in the wall should have been my safe lodging-place (three 'chambers' or almost four, as Cairns well knows!), and that there, with the very clock silenced for me, I should have been so affectionately sheltered. Thanks for this, as for the crown of a long series of kindnesses, precious to remember for the rest of my days.

"I intend home, probably Monday next—from Dumfries, my penult and one remaining

shift. I sprained my ankle a week ago, but it is mending; and otherwise the scene altogether is touching, tender, and mournfully beautiful to me. I wrote a little word to Lady Ruthven, as you suggested. I am still deepish in Notes, and ought to be in the woods of Springkell on my solitary rides of meditation rather.

"With many grateful regards to Madam and yourself,

"I remain

"Always yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

CHAPTER VIII.

JANE WELSH CARLYLE.

CARLYLE'S highest hour of triumph was destined by the envious Fates to precede his darkest hour of bitterness and trial. On Saturday, April 21, while he was still absent in Scotland, and within three weeks of the date of his Address to the Edinburgh students, his wife, the faithful companion of forty years, was "suddenly snatched away from him." Mrs. Carlyle was taking her usual drive in Hyde Park about four o'clock, when her little favourite dog, which was running by the side of the brougham, was run over by a carriage. She was greatly alarmed, though the dog was not seriously hurt. She lifted the dog into the carriage, and the man drove on. Not receiving any call or direction from his mistress,

Sudden Death of Mrs. Carlyle.

as was usual, he stopped the carriage, and discovered her, as he thought, in a fit or ill, and drove to St. George's Hospital, which was near at hand. When there it was discovered that she must have been dead some little time. Her health had been for several months feeble, but not in a state to excite anxiety or alarm.

It was on Thursday, March 29, about nine in the morning, that Carlyle had parted with her and seen her for the last time alive in this world. "Professor Tyndall, full of good spirits, appeared with a cab for King's Cross Station. I was in the saddest sickly mood, full of gloom and misery, but striving to hide it; she too looked very pale and ill, but seemed intent only on forgetting nothing that could further me. . . . The last I saw of her was as she stood with her back to the parlour door to bid me her good-bye. She kissed me twice (she me once, I her a second time); and—oh blind mortals! my one wish and hope was to get back to her again, and be in peace under her bright welcome, for the rest of my days, as it were!"* But *Dis aliter visum*, the Fates had appointed otherwise!

A dear and faithful friend of Carlyle, whose

* *Reminiscences, by Thomas Carlyle*, vol. ii. pp. 294-295.

own premature death ten years later was so irreparable a loss to English literature, leaving as it did his noble defence of Swift but a beautiful and tantalising fragment, and depriving us of the one English man of letters who was worthy to be Carlyle's biographer, or could have satisfactorily executed that important trust, has thus, in his *Life of Charles Dickens*, alluded to this solemn event, and to the character of the noble wife of his illustrious friend :—

John Forster.

"One memorable evening (2nd April 1866) Dickens passed at my house, when he saw Mrs. Carlyle for the last time. Her sudden death followed shortly after, and near the close of April, Dickens had thus written to me from Liverpool : 'It was a terrible shock to me, and poor dear Carlyle has been in my mind ever since. How often I have thought of the unfinished novel! No one now to finish it. None of the writing women come near her at all.' This was an allusion to what had passed at their meeting. It was on the second of April, the day when Carlyle had delivered his Inaugural Address as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, and a couple of ardent words from Professor Tyndall had told her of the triumph just before dinner. She came to us flourishing the telegram in her

Charles Dickens on Mrs. Carlyle.

PORTRAIT OF MRS. CARLYLE
Born July 14, 1801; Died April 21, 1866

hand, and the radiance of her enjoyment of it was upon her all the night. Among other things she gave Dickens the subject for a novel, from what she had herself observed at the outside of a house in her street; of which the various incidents were drawn from the condition of its blinds and curtains, the costumes visible at its windows, the cabs at its door, its visitors admitted or rejected, its articles of furniture delivered or carried away; and the subtle serious humour of it all, the truth in trifling bits of character, and the gradual progress into a half-romantic interest, had enchanted the skilled novelist. She was well into the second volume of her small romance before she left, being as far as her observation then had taken her; but in a few days exciting incidents were expected, the *denoûment* could not be far off, and Dickens was to have it when they met again. Yet it was to something far other than this amusing little fancy his thoughts had carried him, when he wrote of no one being capable to finish what she might have begun. In greater things this was still more true. No one could doubt it who had come within the fascinating influence of that sweet and noble nature. With some of the highest gifts of intellect, and the charm of a

John Forster on Mrs. Carlyle.

most varied knowledge of books and things, there was something 'beyond, beyond.' No one who knew Mrs. Carlyle could replace her loss when she had passed away."*

"She lived," writes Carlyle, "nineteen days after that Edinburgh Monday; on the nineteenth (April 21, 1866, between three and four p.m., as near as I can gather and sift), suddenly, as by a thunderbolt from skies all blue, she was snatched from me; a 'death from the gods,' the old Romans would have called it;—and in all my life there fell on me no misfortune like it; which has smitten my whole world into universal wreck (unless I can repair it in some small measure), and extinguished whatever light of cheerfulness and loving hopefulness life still had in it to me."†

She was buried in the ruined choir of the Abbey Kirk of Haddington. The blow was a terrible one to Carlyle, and in the first delirious anguish of his great sorrow, he found some bitter relief in outpouring his whole soul on paper, in a wild wail and supreme sigh of hopeless and heartbroken woe. What he thus wrote during the months immediately following that

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* *The Life of Charles Dickens. By John Forster.* Vol. iii. pp. 276-277.

† *Reminiscences*, vol ii. p. 299.

solemn event was not meant for the public eye—not at least in the condition in which he left it. Three years after she had been taken from him he commenced an intended sketch of his wife's history; but finding the effort too distressing, he abandoned it after writing a single paragraph. That the earlier incoherent utterances, written from May to July 1866, were not intended for publication in the form in which Mr. Froude thought fit to give them to the public,* in less than a month after Carlyle's own death,—"edited as you edit wagon-loads of broken bricks and dry mortar, simply by tumbling up the wagon,"†—is sufficiently evident from the solemn adjuration written at the end of the manuscript, carefully suppressed by Mr. Froude, but since published by Carlyle's surviving niece, Mrs. Alexander Carlyle,‡ who tended him so piously during the last decade of his life:—

Mr. Froude and Carlyle's *Reminiscences.*

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* "So singular was his [Carlyle's] condition at this time, that he was afterwards unconscious what he had done; and when ten years later I found the Irving MS. and asked him about it, he did not know to what I was alluding." These words actually form a part of Mr. Froude's brief Preface to the *Reminiscences.*

† For an enumeration of some of the more glaring misprints and *errata* in Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, as 'edited' by Mr. Froude, see *The Bibliography of Carlyle* (Lond., Elliot Stock, 1881), pp. 26-28: the list might, however, be considerably extended.

‡ See Letter, signed "Mary Carlyle," in the daily newspapers of Thursday, May 5, 1881.

"I still mainly mean to *burn* this book before my own departure; but feel that I shall always have a kind of grudge to do it, and an indolent excuse, 'Not *yet*, wait: any day that can be done!' and that it *is* possible the thing *may* be left behind me legible to interested survivors,—*friends* only, I will hope, and with *worthy* curiosity, not *un*worthy!

Prohibits publication of papers relating to his wife.

"In which event I solemnly forbid them, each and all, to *publish* this bit of writing *as it stands here*; and warn them that *without fit editing* no *part* of it should be printed (nor so far as I can order, *shall* ever be); and that the '*fit* editing' of perhaps nine-tenths of it will, after I am gone, have become *impossible*.

"T. C.

"Saturday, 28th July, 1866."

Carlyle wrote the following inscription which is engraved on the tombstone of the Welshes at Haddington:—

"Here likewise now rests Jane Welsh Carlyle, spouse of Thomas Carlyle, Chelsea, London. She was born at Haddington, 14th July 1801; only child of the above John Welsh and of Grace Welsh, Caplegell, Dumfriesshire, his wife. In her bright

Epitaph on his wife.

existence she had more sorrows than are common, but also a soft invincibility, a clearness * of discernment and a noble loyalty of heart which are rare. For forty years she was the true and loving helpmate of her husband, and by act and word unweariedly forwarded him, as none else could, in all of worthy that he did or attempted. She died at London 21st April 1866, suddenly snatched away from him, and the light of his life as if gone out."†

Three years after her death, Carlyle writes to an artist at Glasgow, who was executing under his directions a painting of his wife, founded apparently on the existing photographs. The interesting documents which follow have not hitherto been printed: it is through the kindness of an accomplished literary friend in Scotland that we are enabled to lay them before our readers :—

"The picture is beautiful (colouring, finish, &c. all excellent); and has a *great resemblance*,—though to me almost a distressing one, the *expression* being such a failure! In general, I find the look of the face to be sickly, *suffering*,

* In more than one Memoir of Carlyle published during his lifetime, and in all or nearly all the posthumous Memoirs, this is wrongly printed "*capacity* of discernment."

† *Pall-Mall Gazette*, June 22, 1866; *Times*, June 23, 1866.

and even *querulous*,—which latter it surely never was. The *photograph*, as I have always read it, has something of a gentle *stoical smile*; nothing of *complaint*, though perhaps there is visible also enough to complain of. Such at least was the habitual expression of the *face* in such situation.

Letter on his wife's portrait.

"I am too little of an artist to say what detail, or details (probably something very small) would quite rectify the picture; I was struck, first of all, by the *smallness* and comparative insignificance of the *eye*,—and have sent Mr. M°Nab a different photograph, hoping he might himself see the defect there, and what was to be done about it. The eyes, in every face, are the chief feature; but in this face they were in it *infinitely* so,—bright hazel, radiant with many meanings. The *new* photograph which shows both the eyes, gives truly what the habitual expression *there* and otherwise was.—I still think something could be done on that eye, and perhaps on the immediate surroundings of it, to supply what is wanting there.

"I also notice the top part of the *cheek* (where it joins *the nose*), as having something slightly *swoln*-like, which is untrue, and perhaps hurtful? Nothing else can I specifically suggest.

"If Mr. M°Nab, by diligent inspection of the

photograph, and judicious *consideration* of these poor hints, can guess or *see* what is wanting, and *do* it, he will confer a favour on me not to be forgotten while I live.

"T. C.

"23rd April 1869."

The alterations made in accordance with these suggestions seem to have proved satisfactory; and Carlyle writes a second brief note to express his gratitude.

"To Mr. Henderson, Artist, Glasgow.

"DEAR SIR,

"You have with much delicacy and patience followed all the hints I gave; and surely I owe you many thanks. The picture is decidedly improved, evidently the *best* likeness I shall now ever get.

Portrait of Mrs. Carlyle.

"May your Art always prosper with you!

"With many good wishes, I remain yours much obliged,

"T. CARLYLE.

"Chelsea, May 8, 1869."

CHAPTER IX.

DEFENCE OF GOVERNOR EYRE.—REMINISCENCES OF IRVING AND JEFFREY. — VISIT TO MENTONE. — STATEMENT BY MR. RUSKIN.—"SHOOTING NIAGARA."

In August 1866, four months after his wife's death, weighed down as he still was by that great calamity, Carlyle nevertheless thought it a public duty to come forward in defence of Governor Eyre, when he was so clamorously assailed for summarily quelling the insurrection in Jamaica, and saving the island and the lives of the white population.

Edward John Eyre.

Carlyle acted as Vice-President of the Defence Fund. The following is a letter written to Mr. Hamilton Hume, giving his views on the subject in full:

"Ripple Court, Ringwould, Dover,
"August 23, 1866.

"SIR,

"The clamour raised against Governor Eyre appears to me to be disgraceful to the good sense of England; and if it rested on any depth of conviction, and were not rather (as I always flatter myself it is) a thing of rumour and hearsay, of repetition and reverberation, mostly from the teeth outward, I should consider it of evil omen to the country and to its highest interests in these times. For my own share, all the light that has yet reached me on Mr. Eyre and his history in the world goes steadily to establish the conclusion that he is a just, humane, and valiant man, faithful to his trusts everywhere, and with no ordinary faculty of executing them; that his late services in Jamaica were of great, perhaps of incalculable value, as certainly they were of perilous and appalling difficulty—something like the case of 'fire,' suddenly reported, 'in the ship's powder-room,' in mid-ocean, where the moments mean the ages, and life and death hang on your use or misuse of the moments; and, in short, that penalty and clamour are not the thing this Governor merits from any of us, but honour and

Letter on Governor Eyre.

thanks, and wise imitation (I will farther say), should similar emergencies arise, on the great scale or on the small, in whatever we are governing!

"The English nation never loved anarchy, nor was wont to spend its sympathy on miserable mad seditions, especially of this inhuman and half-brutish type; but always loved order, and the prompt suppression of seditions, and reserved its tears for something worthier than promoters of such delirious and fatal enterprises who had got their wages for their sad industry. Has the English nation changed, then, altogether? I flatter myself it is not, not yet quite; but only that certain loose, superficial portions of it have become a great deal louder, and not any wiser, than they formerly used to be.

"At any rate, though much averse, at any time, and at this time in particular, to figure on committees, or run into public noises without call, I do at once, and feel that as a British citizen I should, and must, make you welcome to my name for your Committee, and to whatever good it can do you. With the hope only that many other British men, of far more significance in such a matter, will at once or gradually do the like; and that, in fine, by wise effort and persistence, a blind and disgraceful act of public

injustice may be prevented; and an egregious folly as well—not to say, for none can say or compute, what a vital detriment, throughout the British Empire, in such an example set to all the colonies and governors the British Empire has!

"Farther service, I fear, I am not in a state to promise, but the whole weight of my conviction and good wishes is with you; and if other service possible to me do present itself, I shall not want for willingness in case of need. Enclosed is my mite of contribution to your fund.

"I have the honour to be yours truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"To Hamilton Hume, Esq.,
"Hon. Sec. 'Eyre Defence Fund.'"

Carlyle presides at meetings of Defence Fund.

On Wednesday, August 29th, and on the following Wednesday, September 5th, Carlyle presided at the first and second Meetings of the "Eyre Defence Fund Committee," held at No. 9, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall. At the second Meeting Mr. Ruskin was also present, and spoke at some length. *

* Committee Pamphlet of the "Eyre Defence and Aid Fund," Lond. 1866, 4to, pp. 21-23.

The following note on the subject, hitherto unpublished, is written in Carlyle's hand on the reverse of a letter addressed to "Thomas Carlyle, Esq.," 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea, S.W.," and signed "Thomas Gibbons," asking to be "enlightened on the matter." It bears no date, and the signature has been cut away as an autograph.

"To Hamilton Hume, Esq., &c. &c.

"Please write to this Salford (Manchester) man;—and set him upon getting up a subscription there?

"Your Committee 'pamphlet' is much approved of; and a wider and wider circulation of it recommended. So says a brother of mine from Dumfries,—for whom I have a £5 to pay you (on Monday, I hope). The newspaper slips *in re* Gordon were both good: thanks for sending them. I have written to Mr. Eyre, in reply to his interesting letter. Professor Tyndall seemed to be contemplating something of public utterance on our affair: has he been with you? As above said, I hope to call on Monday."

The autumn of 1866 was occupied at Cheyne Row, in a mood of sadness but of recovered composure, by writing the Reminiscences of Edward Irving, interrupted early in December by a

journey to Mentone (whither he was accompanied by Professor Tyndall) and where they were resumed on December 27, and finished on the 2nd January 1867. The Reminiscences of Lord Jeffrey were commenced on the following day and finished on Saturday, January 19, 1867. Those of Southey and Wordsworth were begun at Mentone, Monday, January 28, and finished there March 8, 1867.

Shortly after his return to Chelsea, Carlyle wrote a solemn and beautiful letter of condolence to his friend Mr. Erskine of Linlathen, whose guest he had been at Edinburgh a year before, during the brief period of triumph that preceded his own irreparable loss.

"Chelsea, 1st April 1867.

"DEAR MR. ERSKINE,

To Thomas Erskine of Linlathen.

"Your mournful tidings, not unanticipated, were abundantly sad to us here; and have been painfully present ever since, though till now I have written nothing. Alas! what can writing do in such a case? The inexorable stroke has fallen; the sore heart has to carry on its own unfathomable dialogue with the Eternities and their gloomy fact; all speech on it, from the friendliest sympathiser, is apt to be vain, or

worse. Under your quiet words in that little note, there is legible to me a depth of violent grief and bereavement, which seems to enjoin silence rather. We knew the beautiful soul that has departed, the love that had united you and her from the beginnings of existence,—and how desolate and sad the scene now is for him who is left solitary. Ah me! ah me!

"Yesterday gone a twelvemonth (31st March 1866, *Saturday* by the day of the week,) was the day I arrived at your door in Edinburgh, and was met by that friendliest of hostesses and you; two days before, I had left at the door of this room one dearer and kinder than all the earth to me, whom I was not to behold again: what a change for you since then, what a change for me! Change *after* change following upon both of us,—upon you especially!

"It is the saddest feature of old age, that the old man has to see himself daily grow more lonely; reduced to commune with the inarticulate Eternities, and the loved ones, now unresponsive, who have preceded him thither. Well, well; there is a blessedness in this too, if we take it well. There is a grandeur in it, if also an *extent* of sombre sadness, which is new to one; nor is hope quite wanting,—nor the clear conviction that those whom *we* would most

screen from sore pain and misery are now safe and at rest. It lifts one to real kingship withal, *real* for the first time in this scene of things. Courage, my friend; let us endure patiently and act piously to the end.

"Shakespeare sings pathetically somewhere*:—

> 'Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
> Nor the furious winter's rages;
> *Thou* thy worldly task hast done,
> Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:'

—inexpugnable and well art *thou*! These tones go tinkling through me sometimes, like the pious chime of far-off church bells.

"Adieu, my friend. I must come to Scotland again at least once, if I live; and while you are there it is not quite a solitary country to me.

"Yours ever truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

Mr. Ruskin.

At this period Carlyle was visited by the distinguished writer on art who for some years previously had been more and more coming under his direct influence. Between the author of *Modern Painters* and the historian of Friedrich there were many points of sympathy as well as some points

* *Cymbeline*, act iv. scene 2.

of divergence. Carlyle, it is true, knew little and cared less than nothing for art as art, regarding it as idle dilettantism; and at an earlier period he would probably have received with a good deal of indifference, incredulity, and amazement, theories and enthusiasms which the bitter experience of life had by this time schooled Mr. Ruskin to repress or to keep well in the background. But on the other hand Mr. Ruskin's mind had been more and more growing into sympathy and unison with Carlyle's denunciations of shams and "shoddy," of rebellion and disorder, and of the social and political tendencies of the time; and he himself in his recent writings had been more and more subordinating mere æsthetic questions to these pressing and urgent practical ones. Those points of strong agreement would alone have sufficed to create a *modus vivendi*, if nothing more, between these two remarkable men. But the younger was ready to sit at the feet of the elder as a Gamaliel; and to have gained a disciple so famous and so much after his own heart could not to Carlyle be a matter of indifference. Be this as it may, Mr. Ruskin, who had been associated with Carlyle in his public proceedings in defence of Governor Eyre in the preceding September, and who had for some

time been in correspondence with him, now became an occasional if not a frequent visitor at Cheyne Row.* At this period Mr. Ruskin had commenced the writing of a series of letters to a working man of Sunderland, the late Mr. Thomas Dixon, which appeared in instalments in the *Manchester Examiner*, in the *Leeds Mercury*, and probably in other northern newspapers, during the months of March, April, and May 1867. On one of his visits to Cheyne Row Mr. Ruskin appears to have misunderstood, or involuntarily exaggerated, or at any rate to have received too much *au sérieux*, some emphatic utterances of Carlyle, meant to be taken *cum grano salis*, respecting the propensities, habits, and behaviour of the London populace, particularly as affecting himself in his own walks abroad, as contrasted with the courteous consideration shown by the peasantry of the Italian town from which he had recently returned. At any rate Mr. Ruskin opened his next letter to Dixon with the

Mr. Ruskin visits Carlyle.

* The friendly intercourse was in no wise interrupted by the unfortunate little *contretemps* here narrated. When Emerson visited England for the third time in 1873, Carlyle told him that "Ruskin was the best man who came now habitually to see him" (*Life and Literary Relics of Charles Edward Appleton*, D.C.L., Lond., Trübner 1881, p. 51). Mr. Ruskin inscribed his *Munera Pulveris* to Carlyle in language of enthusiastic warmth; and Carlyle went out of his way to quote a long passage from one of the Letters entitled *Fors Clavigera*, in his *Early Kings of Norway*, in 1875.

following paragraph descriptive of a visit paid by him to Cheyne Row on the evening of Thursday 25th April 1867 :—

"27th April, 1867.

"My dear D——,

"On Thursday evening last, as I told you, I was with Mr. Carlyle; and he was speaking of the differences in good or evil between the coast of the Mediterranean in winter and the Thames shore in spring. And the one great difference which he felt bitterly was not in cloud or cold, but in the different temper of the people about him. For the peasantry of Mentone (where he lived all this last winter) were gentle and modest and kind; and he could walk alone, far among the hills, and meet with nothing but quiet human courtesy, and rendering of such simple respect as to an old man is both due and comforting. But in the streets of Chelsea, and of the whole district of London round it, from the Park to the outer country (some twelve or fifteen miles of disorganised, foul, sinful, and most wretched life), he now cannot walk without being insulted, chiefly because he is a grey, old man, and also because he is cleanly dressed; these two conditions of him being wholly hostile, as the mob of the street feel, to their own

Mr. Ruskin to Thomas Dixon.

instincts, and, so far as they appear to claim some kind of reverence and recognition of betterness, to be instantly crushed and jeered out of their way; and this temper of the London populace has been, he said, steadily on the increase for these last twenty years, so that now the streets have become nearly impassable to him, riding or walking, and he must either get through the quietest he can find to the Park, or be fain to walk his rounds under the night, when it cannot be manifest to the public provocation either that he is old or has a whole coat on." *

On reading the above, which was duly published in the Yorkshire and Lancashire newspapers, a working-man at Rochdale was very naturally prompted to write to Carlyle, informing him of the paragraph that had "gone the round of the papers," and making further inquiries respecting so extraordinary an allegation. Carlyle replied as follows :—

"SIR,

"The thing now 'going the rounds' is untrue, diverges from the fact throughout, and

* *Manchester Examiner*, Tuesday, May 7, 1867.—It is almost needless to mention that this paragraph disappeared when Mr. Ruskin's Letters were afterwards collected and published in a volume, under the title of *Time and Tide by Weare and Tyne*.

in essentials is curiously the reverse of the fact; an 'incredible' (and at once forgettable) 'thing.' That is the solution of your difficulty.

"T. CARLYLE.

"Chelsea, May 22, 1867." *

Erroneous statement of Mr. Ruskin.

Not content with this informal denial, Carlyle, finding the story still current, and still attracting attention and belief, sent the following communication to the newspapers:—

"A CONTRADICTION.

"SIR,

"In reference to a newspaper paragraph now idly circulating, with my name in it as connected with 'insults on the streets,' and other such matter, permit me to say that it is an untrue paragraph, disagrees with the fact throughout, and in essentials is curiously the reverse of the fact; a paragraph altogether erroneous, misfounded, superfluous, and even absurd.

Carlyle's contradiction.

"I remain, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"T. CARLYLE.

"Chelsea, May 28, 1867."

* *Express* (London), Wednesday, May 29, 1867.

On Monday, June 3, the *Times* newspaper made the matter the subject of a leading article, which elicited the following characteristic letter from Carlyle :—

"*To the Editor of The Times.*

"SIR,

"I could still wish, by way of marginal note to your friendly article of Monday last (the *Times* of June 3), to add, for my own sake, and for a much-valued friend's, the two following little bits of commentary :—

"1st. That I by no means join in heavily blaming Mr. Ruskin, and, indeed, do not blame him at all, but the contrary, except for the almost inconceivable practical blunder of printing my name, and then of carelessly hurling topsy-turvy into wild incredibility all he had to report of me—of me, and indirectly of the whole vast multitude of harmless neighbours, whom I live with here—in London and its suburbs, more than 2,000,000 of us, I should think, who all behave by second nature in an obliging, peaceable, and perfectly human manner to each other, and are all struck with amazement at Mr. Ruskin's hasty paragraph upon us.

Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin.

"2nd. That in regard to the populace or

canaille of London, to the class distinguishable by behaviour as our non-human, or half-human neighbours, which class is considerably more extensive and miscellaneous, and much more dismal and disgusting than you seem to think, I substantially agree with all that Mr. Ruskin has said of it.

"I remain, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"T. CARLYLE.*

"Chelsea, June 7."

John Rutter Chorley, who is so lovingly and touchingly alluded to in the following letter to his brother, Henry Fothergill Chorley, is the same "John Chorley who was always so good to me," mentioned in Carlyle's Will. He was then, as the letter pathetically enough discloses, *in articulo mortis*, and he died ten days after the date of it. His acquaintance with Spanish literature was wider and more profound than that of any other English scholar of his time.

"Chelsea, 19th June 1867.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Your note of yesterday is a most

* *Times*, Monday, June 10, 1867.

welcome favour to me; a very great and almost *sacred* bit of charity and solace done me in the dark and sad element where you yourself are now living and waiting! The last time I saw your dear brother—alas, I little thought it was the *last!*—I noticed no fatal symptom in him; nothing but very great misery and disquiet, which I lightly supposed the summer weather, and a shift to the shore of the sea, which was always such a favourite with him, would clear away; and I am never since free from an occasional doubt that I may have really pained him and done myself injustice by my light and hopeful way of treating all his misgivings and bad prognostics, which have proved so dismally true—alas, alas!

To Henry Fothergill Chorley.

"From your brother William's letters to my brother John at Dumfries, I am kept in knowledge of the progress of things from day to day towards their inevitable goal; and I thank Heaven along with you, that pain and irritation are quite gone, and that *sleep* and quiet are now the attendants of that ardent soul to its final rest. Final and perfect, where all the weary do at length *rest!*

"If in any fit moment you could whisper to him, that I, who owe him so much, did always honour and esteem him as few others; am touched

to the heart with what is going on, know well what loss I am sustaining, and shall piously regret him all my remaining days, the fact will abundantly support you; and should the *opportunity* offer (*not* otherwise, I beg), it will be a drop of consolation to me.

"May God be with him! may God be with us all!

"Yours, with deep sympathy,

"T. CARLYLE." *

In the summer of this year Carlyle resumed his pen with a view to publication for the first time since the completion of his History of Friedrich. In August 1867 there appeared anonymously, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, a kind of latest Latter-Day Pamphlet, under the title of "Shooting Niagara: and After?" Shortly afterwards it was republished in a separate form, with additions and corrections, and with the author's name on the title-page.

Shooting Niagara.

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*Henry Fothergill Chorley. Autobiography, Memoir, and Letters. Compiled by Henry G. Hewlett. Lond 1873, vol. ii. pp. 284-287.

CHAPTER X.

CORRESPONDENCE. — PERSONAL REMINISCENCES. — LIBRARY EDITION AND PEOPLE'S EDITION OF CARLYLE'S WORKS.—THE FRENCH-GERMAN WAR.—SUPPLEMENT TO LIFE OF SCHILLER.—FORSTER'S LIFE OF DICKENS.—(1868–1874.)

THERE is another letter of Carlyle's to Mr. Erskine, dated in January 1868, of which we quote a portion. It offers a sad and gloomy picture of his now solitary life.

"Chelsea, 23rd January 1868.

"DEAR MR. ERSKINE,

"The sight of your handwriting is itself welcome and cheering to me at all times, and I owe you many thanks this time for that pious little visit you have made to Greenend and poor Betty. Often had I thought of asking you

to do such a thing for me by some opportunity, but in the new sad circumstances, never had the face. Now that the ice is broken, let me hope you will from time to time continue, and on the whole, keep yourself and me in some kind of mutual visibility with poor Betty, so long as we are all spared to continue here. The world has not many shrines to a devout man at present, and perhaps in our own section of it there are few objects holding more authentically of Heaven and an unseen 'better world' than the pious loving soul and patient, heavy-laden life of this poor old venerable woman. The love of human creatures one to another, where it is true and unchangeable, often strikes me as a strange fact in their poor history, a kind of perpetual gospel, revealing itself in them; sad, solemn, beautiful, the heart and mother of all that can, in any way, ennoble their otherwise mean and contemptible existence in this world.

"I am very idle here, very solitary, which I find to be oftenest less miserable to me than the common society that offers. It is a great evil to me that now I have no work, none worth calling by the name; that I am too weak, too languid, too sad of heart, to be fit for any work, in fact to care sufficiently for any object left me in the world, to think of grappling round it and coercing

it by work. A most sorry dog-kennel it oftenest all seems to me, and wise words, if one even had them, to be thrown away on it. *Basta basta*, I for most part say of it, and look with longings towards the still country where at last we and our loved ones shall be together again. Amen, amen!

"A sister of mine is with me here for these two months, to help us through the dark hollow of the year; it is the one you saw in Edinburgh, as she right well remembers, I can see. Lady Ashburton is again in Mentone with her child. Adieu, dear friend,—

"Yours ever,

"T. CARLYLE."

The following letter was addressed by Carlyle, during the period of his Rectorship, to Dr. Hutchison Stirling, one of the candidates for the Chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh:—

"Chelsea, 16th June 1868.

"DEAR STIRLING,

"You well know how reluctant I have been to interfere at all in the election now close on us, and that in stating, as bound, what my own clear knowledge of your qualities was, I have strictly held by

To J. Hutchison Stirling.

that, and abstained from more. But the news I now have from Edinburgh is of such a complexion, so dubious, and so surprising to me, and I now find I shall privately have so much regret in a certain event—which seems to be reckoned possible, and to depend on one gentleman of the seven—that, to secure my own conscience in the matter, a few plainer words seem needful. To whatever I have said of you already, therefore, I now volunteer to add, that I think you not only the one man in Britain capable of bringing Metaphysical Philosophy, in the ultimate, German or European, and highest actual form of it, distinctly home to the understanding of British men who wish to understand it, but that I notice in you farther, on the moral side, a sound strength of intellectual discernment, a noble valour and reverence of mind, which seems to me to mark you out as the man capable of doing us the highest service in Ethical science too: that of restoring, or decisively beginning to restore, the doctrine of morals to what I must ever reckon its one true and everlasting basis (namely, the divine or supra-sensual one), and thus of victoriously reconciling and rendering identical the latest dictates of modern science with the earliest dawnings of wisdom among the race of men. This is truly my opinion, and how im-

portant to me, not for the sake of Edinburgh University alone, but of the whole world for ages to come, I need not say to you! I have not the honour of any personal acquaintance with Mr. Adam Black, late member for Edinburgh, but for fifty years back have known him, in the distance, and by current and credible report, as a man of solid sense, independence, probity, and public spirit; and if, in your better knowledge of the circumstances, you judge it suitable to read this note to him—to him, or indeed to any other person—you are perfectly at liberty to do so.

"Yours sincerely always,

"T. CARLYLE."

Death of Sir George Sinclair.

In 1863 Carlyle had written, as we saw, a letter of condolence to his old and hospitable friend Sir George Sinclair, on the death of his wife, Lady Camilla Sinclair. In the autumn of 1868, some five years later, Sir George Sinclair was himself summoned away. To Miss Sinclair, his daughter, Carlyle expressed his feelings on hearing of the event in the following brief but solemn little note:—

"DEAR MISS SINCLAIR,

"Your first black-edged announcement was heavy news to me. I truly sympathise in the loss we have all had—a sensible loss to me, a true one, whether felt or not, to all the world, and to you certainly the greatest of all. We must submit; we have none of us here a continuing city. We shall go to him; he will not return to us. Might we all but go leaving a life as gentle and as innocent behind us.

"Yours, with many sad regrets,

"T. CARLYLE."

Library Edition of Carlyle's Works.

In 1868 was commenced the publication by instalments of the very fine and handsome Library Edition of Carlyle's Works, completed in thirty-four volumes. The typographical execution and other details were highly satisfactory; and in all the external appliances that make reading a luxury instead of a toil, few editions of the writings of any English author can compare with this. It was a decided desideratum, for the type of the first collected edition of 1857-8 was uncomfortably small. To the revision and re-arrangement of the text and the careful and laborious indexing of each work and of the whole, Carlyle himself paid special attention. This setting of his house

in order pleasantly occupied his time from week to week, and from day to day, during nearly two years. It was just the kind of work that in his now solitary and forlorn condition, with recovered composure but with failing strength, he was still equal to perform without too strenuous and severe an effort. And the punctual and mechanical performance of it, in accordance with his long-trained habits of order and method, had a very salutary effect on him. After his heavy spell of work on *Friedrich*, it was a recreation rather than a task; it supplied sufficient stimulus to body and mind, without overtaxing his powers. This and the two or three following years were to him years of serene composure and in some degree of recovered cheerfulness; and these were the years when the present writer had the good fortune to establish a personal acquaintance with him and to enjoy his society and talk.

The Library Edition of Carlyle's Works commenced with *Sartor Resartus*, and the volume contained an excellent engraving of a very expressive photograph by Elliot and Fry. The author appended a Note to this edition respecting the genesis and original publication of the book, which we have already explained in detail fully enough.

The following letter was sent by Carlyle to the

widow of a Presbyterian minister, on the receipt of a volume of her husband's sermons, which she had edited:—

"Chelsea, 12th November 1868.

DEAR MADAM,

"Your gentle, sad and modest gift is mournful and affecting to me. I received it with thanks, and it shall be among my precious things. Well do I understand your desolate feelings; and what pious beauty was in the noble labours you undertook for the sake of him that is gone; the fruit of which is this book, which I doubt not will be a spiritual benefit to many. May it be a blessing to many; as to yourself, I cannot doubt, it has already been! An admirable work; and a difficult, and at last a successful—possible perhaps to you alone of the living! I know well what of solacement and sacred assuagement to a bitter sorrow must have been in it, and much approve of your courageous wisdom and still augur well of you. Human sympathy, alas, cannot help; only time and devout reflection—and above all strenuous employment in doing what remains to be done. Only once did I see the loved partner whom you have lost; but I marked deeply in him the features of a faithful, steadfast, and piously high-minded man,—as

indeed I had been taught to expect by what my dear, sincere, and pious mother often said of him. Your loss, I see how immense it is, and how vain is speech upon it. I will only say, may you have comfort springing from your own faithful, brave, and loving soul, inspired (we may well say) from a higher source. With my grateful regards and best sympathies, Dear Madam,

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

Personal Reminiscences.

It was in the early days of December 1868 that the present writer first established himself on a footing of intimacy with Carlyle. He had written to him several times during the year 1862, when the reading, or study rather, of the first and second and of the then newly-published third volume of *Friedrich* was occupying his leisure hours and opening to his astonished vision new realms of thought and feeling hitherto undreamt-of, during months of seclusion at pleasant Sunbury-on-Thames—letters of ardent gratitude for the good received from the book;—and had sent a little list of Errata discovered in the first edition, some cuttings, one or two eighteenth-century Memoirs bearing upon

the subject, nay even an old medal struck in commemoration of some important event in Friedrich's reign—all worthless, probably, or at any rate not considered worthy of acknowledgment by the great writer. But one morning early in January 1863, he ventured, with some hesitation, and not probably without a good deal of ill-concealed timidity, to introduce himself to Carlyle, whom he chanced to meet on one of those morning rambles in the old Chelsea districts which he was wont to take before settling to work for the day. The memory of this earliest interview with one whom he had so long and so earnestly reverenced from afar off is now very vague, no record of it having apparently been made at the time—unless in some long-lost journal, or in some letter to a friend or correspondent, not now rememberable or recoverable. It was a bitter frosty January morning (so much the writer remembers), and Carlyle, though well wrapt up, had got into a kind of trot to keep himself warm, which rendered it by no means easy to keep pace with him and to follow his talk. He was received kindly and graciously enough, however; and if from his extreme youth he was still a little nervous or not quite at his ease, he had no cause to regret his temerity. After

The author's first interview with Carlyle.

the usual inquiries which Carlyle never failed to make, when a stranger introduced himself to his notice, as to his occupation, what he was *doing* in the world, &c., the talk must have run mainly on schoolmastering. There was some strong advice about reading and study, with illustration drawn from his own early practice in those particulars at the same age. Then there came parting at his door—a shake of the hand—and an expression of his readiness to render any service to his young disciple that might be practicable, should need for such arise. The above is a mere outline of this first interview—vividly enough remembered in outline; but vaguely and dimly enough otherwise.

Second interview.

The second took place in the autumn of the same year (Friday, 9th October 1863), about a month before the writer's departure for the East; and a very brief and scanty record of it does fortunately exist. On the afternoon of that day, at about five o'clock, the writer happened to follow Carlyle in Piccadilly into a Chelsea omnibus. There were several other passengers, and it was not until they had, one by one, departed on their ways at various stages of the journey that, as the omnibus neared Church-street, he ventured to recall himself to the

remembrance of Carlyle, with whom he was now left alone. A brief *tête-à-tête* ensued, a brief walk to his house, where we parted at the door. The projected voyage was mentioned, and advice followed from the sage to keep one's eyes open in the East, and observe the things that were to be seen there; advice also to abandon snuff-taking (a habit somewhat prematurely if not foolishly adopted, his indulgence in which during the ride in the omnibus had not escaped Carlyle's observant eye), and to try smoking as a substitute;—a piece of practical homely counsel afterwards followed with the most beneficial results. Then came an outburst of boyish enthusiasm about Emerson—"Was it not wonderful that in a country in such an anarchic condition as the United States at that time such a master-mind as Emerson's should not share in the practical conduct and control of affairs?" with warm and glowing tribute from Carlyle to the "beautiful soul" of his Transatlantic friend, but with addition of, "God forbid that I should ever be governed by Emerson! We should have chaos come again!" and much to that effect, forcibly enough expressed, but now mostly forgotten. The question was of course a puerile one, but the answer shows how ready Carlyle was to make the just distinction between the wisdom of philo-

sophic contemplation and practical administrative ability which he has sometimes been accused of overlooking or confusing. All the rest of the talk is lost—nor was there much of it that time; for the distance to his house was of the shortest. Kindly words at parting, kindly good wishes on his side, one knows there would be,—words that might well seem to speed the fair ship *Una* as she ploughed her way five weeks afterwards through the blue Mediterranean (sunny and calm in spite of November), in that happy dawn and springtide of life.

Third interview.

The next opportunity that occurred to the writer for renewing his intercourse with Carlyle was nearly two years after his return from the East, on Wednesday, 5th June 1867. The writer met Carlyle on the afternoon of that day in Gloucester-road, South Kensington, and with some difficulty, after a lapse of nearly four years, recalled himself to his recollection. In the interval that heavy and sudden blow had fallen on Carlyle's own life from which he was only just beginning to recover composure. On this occasion he talked much on the perils, dangers and uncertainties of a literary career, on which his young hearer was then about to embark, or had already embarked, after a sort. He spoke with

an indifference, with a scorn it seemed, that rather shocked one, of Shelley; with almost equal indifference (though with praise as regards the sturdy independence of his life and character) of Wordsworth; and he ended by the expression of a hope that the youthful literary aspirant he was talking to never wrote verse, and a strong injunction to eschew that course—advice not perhaps very palatable or acceptable at the time, but of which the wisdom has since become manifest enough. He spoke feelingly and admiringly of Burns and Johnson, and recommended the study of their lives and writings. He spoke with fiery wrath and scorn of the "universal reign of shoddy from Dan to Beersheba." During our walk, which was a much longer one than on the two previous occasions, four years before, he severely reprimanded for her idleness a young, sturdy, and able-bodied beggar-woman who vainly appealed to us for an alms.* At parting he bade the companion of his walk

* A similar story is related in the *Westminster Review* of April 1881:—"Mr. Carlyle and the late Mr. G. H. Lewes were walking together in Richmond Park, when they suddenly encountered a beggar. 'For God's sake, sir,' said the beggar, first accosting Mr. Lewes, 'give me something; I'm starving.' Repeating his application, and finding it without effect, he then addressed Mr. Carlyle: 'I'm starving, I say, sir. For Christ's sake give me something.' Thus adjured, Carlyle turned on him, shouting, 'You dirty, lazy scoundrel! *you* dare to ask alms for Christ's sake! Christ has no transactions with the like of you.'"

"try to make some small piece of the world a little more cosmic."

Some seventeen months elapsed before another occasion presented itself for further intercourse with Carlyle. On Sunday, November 8th, 1868, after spending the day in a suburban district, and listening in the evening to an eloquent and original discourse from the lips of another modern prophet and seer (and a fellow-countryman of Carlyle's), the writer returned by a late train to Victoria Station, and on his walk homewards had the good fortune to meet Carlyle just beyond Eaton-square. It was less difficult than formerly to revive his recognition, and after preliminary inquiries, satisfactorily answered, of one's business out of doors at so late an hour of the night, and a clean bill of health shown in that respect, Carlyle proceeded to put his usual question as to one's work and outlooks in the world. The writer had lately edited and prefaced a tiny twin pair of volumes by the poet-painter, William Blake. Of these he told Carlyle, who had known the late Alexander Gilchrist, the author of the Life which first brought to Blake, whether as artist or poet, any full meed of public recognition; and he seemed interested. We have

George Macdonald.

Fourth interview.

already seen that he had read with interest and had warmly acknowledged the *Life of Etty* sent him by the same writer, and of the *Life of Blake*, which he appeared to have read too, he was not averse to discourse for awhile.

We walked Chelsea-wards, past the old College (or Royal Hospital), by what quietest bye-ways were available; and he poured out his wonderful talk on all subjects that came uppermost (the spiritual isolation of Goethe, so far out-towering all his contemporaries but Schiller; the Irish Church; Germany; Louis Napoleon; 'voting for Odger,'—which he for one had entirely declined to do;—&c. &c.), in a quiet stream of mild wisdom, sometimes irradiated by flashes of humour and pauses of laughter (for he was a hearty and vigorous laugher), and sometimes bursting into stormy indignation at the madness and folly of the time.

That night, which is deeply burnt into his memory, when the writer, after having made his reverent adieux, parted with Carlyle at his door, under the solemn stars, there came from him, as he mounted his steps, a final admonition pronounced in tones of awful adjuration that now seem to reverberate from the grave: "Work, 'now while it is day: the *night* cometh, when no man can work.'"

The writer does not remember whether he promised on that occasion to send Carlyle the two tiny volumes of Blake's Poems already alluded to. But at any rate some three weeks later (Friday, 27th November) he took occasion to do so, at the same time asking permission to print some passages from Carlyle's early, inedited, uncollected or less-known writings in one of the chapters of a little work which he had recently executed for the late Mr. Basil Montagu Pickering of Piccadilly, on the *Unknown Works of Well-known Authors*, which was still remaining in manuscript, and from a combination of causes, was never destined to see the light. Mr. Ruskin's ready consent had been already obtained, and Mr. Browning's, some time before; but Carlyle's was still to be applied for, and the present seemed a favourable opportunity. A careful, nay even elaborate list of the pieces alluded to (and from which it was desired to make the quotations) was submitted and enclosed in the letter containing the request, to which a reply came on the following Tuesday, in the great writer's own hand, couched as follows (we omit one sentence in which Carlyle made an erroneous guess at the name of the publisher) :—

"Chelsea, 1st December 1868.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have received your pretty pair of Blake volumes,* towards which you have done surely the part of a faithful Editor. I feel much obliged by that and by many other proofs of your constant goodwill to me.

Carlyle to R. H. S.

"As to the 'Omitted Pieces' affair, I find it singular and questionable in all the cases supposable, especially in my own, who am still living and publishing: why drag from their *oubliettes* pieces which the authors themselves have thought worthy to be left there? In short I cannot grant any permission, especially of that general kind; and indeed my fear is it may be an unsound adventure for yourself also.

"Thursday afternoon, about three p.m., if you appear here, I shall be going out to walk, and will take you with me a part of the way, and hear what you have to say about all that.

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE.

"R. H. Shepherd, Esq."

* *Poetical Sketches, by William Blake. Now first reprinted from the original Edition of* 1783. Edited and Prefaced by Richard Herne Shepherd. London: Basil Montagu Pickering, 196, Piccadilly, 1868, pp. xiv. 96.

Songs of Innocence and of Experience, showing the two contrary states of the Human Soul, by William Blake. Edited and Prefaced by Richard Herne Shepherd. London: B. M. Pickering, 196, Piccadilly, 1868, pp. xiv. 112.

At a few minutes before three o'clock on that memorable Thursday afternoon, the recipient of the above letter knocked at No. 5, Cheyne Row, and was duly shown up by the housekeeper to Carlyle's study—a sufficiently spacious room on the first floor, hung round with historical portraits. Here the venerable historian and philosopher was seated at a table, in a long dressing-gown and smoking-cap, in the act of writing.

Fifth interview.

He greeted his visitor kindly as he entered; and, the day being cold, thoughtfully urged him to draw near the fire. The visitor expressed his sense of Carlyle's great condescension in receiving him thus at his house, and trusted he had arrived punctually to the appointment made. In a few minutes Carlyle had finished his writing, and stooping to gather carefully the shreds and scraps of paper that had fallen or lay scattered on the carpet, flung them into a waste-paper basket or into the fire. He then inquired if his visitor smoked, and the latter was able to assure him that he did, and how he had benefited by the advice of five years before to adopt that habit, in preference to the more questionable one of "snuffing," respecting which Carlyle had then addressed to him so friendly and fatherly a caution. Meanwhile Carlyle had chosen from

the cupboard a long clay pipe, filled it with his favourite York-River tobacco, and lighted it. But no invitation followed (or none that was so understood) to join him in this indulgence; and Carlyle left the room, carrying his pipe with him as soon as he had lighted it, to prepare for the promised walk, desiring his guest to await his return for a few minutes while he made himself ready. During his brief absence the visitor, thus left alone, and loving, like Dr. Johnson, to look at the backs of books, ventured, without removing any of the volumes from their places, to give a hasty and curious glance at the "poor and almost pathetic collection of books" of which he makes mention in his Will. No recollection now remains to him of its contents, except of the copy of Major Richardson's *Literary Leaves*, already alluded to, and a copy of the two-volume edition of Robert Browning's Poems.

In a few minutes Carlyle, re-appearing, duly equipped for a walk, invited his visitor to descend the staircase, insisting on yielding him the precedence, a privilege of hospitality we were fain to waive rather, but were perforce compelled to accept. Carlyle was extremely polite in all such matters; and there was a stately courtesy, too, in the "Sir" which he habitually added in addressing men much younger than himself,

and without special claim to such consideration and etiquette on any other score.

The writer noticed copies of Woolner's busts of Carlyle and Tennyson in the passage, as they descended the staircase, and some ejaculation that escaped his lips on beholding them elicited a brief reply from Carlyle. Emerging from the house into the street, Carlyle plunged at once *in medias res* in regard to the matter that had now brought us together. On learning who was to be the actual publisher of the proposed work, he expressed some satisfaction, and a very high opinion of the career of his father, William Pickering, of whose publications he spoke with warm praise. Next in regard to the little list of his *opera minora*. He said the perusal of it had not been altogether unprofitable to him, carrying his thoughts back to many things and persons in the dim far past. He seemed curious as to how so much out-of-the-way information had been collected. He had noticed in the list something about Leigh Hunt—he did not remember ever to have written anything about Leigh Hunt. He had apparently forgotten the memoranda concerning him, on the subject of the pension; but he did recollect a letter he wrote to Hunt about his Autobiography, after reading it, and how much they were affected—his wife and he—at Hunt's

effusive gratitude on their next meeting. What was that item of advice to a young man, printed in *Chambers's Journal?* That must be a useful piece, probably; but it was impossible to recollect all that one wrote to extraneous persons.

There was one item he missed in the list; and then he proceeded to inform his companion of the papers on Irish Affairs which he contributed to the *Examiner* and *Spectator* in the great year of Revolution. He did not remember the exact dates; indeed he should rather like to have note of them; with a little diligent search they might doubtless be discovered. Some of them had been reprinted at the time for distribution, separately, as halfpenny pamphlets, by Childs of Bungay.

We talked of De Quincey, who, Carlyle said, was quite right in his animadversions on some of the Scotticisms in the first edition of the translation of *Wilhelm Meister*. They were removed in the later editions. He seemed not at all averse to talk of his early writings, spoke with evident pleasure and pride of his mathematical work, the translation of Legendre, and of the Essay on Proportion that accompanied it, which he said still remained probably the most lucid and exhaustive exposition of the subject. He spoke, too, of his "double-goer," the late

Thomas Carlyle, of the Scottish Bar;* not, if we remember rightly, otherwise than with kindliness. He spoke of Heine, of his humour, a quality he had never observed in a Jew; but he had discovered on going into the matter further that Heine's parentage was only Jewish on one side. The writer ventured to ask him if it were his intention to publish any more pamphlets in the style of his recent *Shooting Niagara*, to form a kind of second series of *Latter-Day Pamphlets?* He said, no.

We had now reached Michael's Grove, where he had a call to make; but he voluntarily offered to retrace his steps as far as Brompton Crescent, in order to conclude whatever subject was then on the *tapis*. He gave his companion free leave to accost him whenever he might chance to meet him abroad on his walks, or in a public conveyance; but said he would not desire to be sought at his house; and glad of that sufficient if only partial privilege, and grateful for his

* In alluding to this namesake and compatriot of his Carlyle is made to speak in the *Reminiscences* (vol. i. p. 313) of "the numerous mistakes which he, from my *fifteenth* year onwards, had occasioned me." As the advocate was nine years the junior of Carlyle, we shrewdly suspect this word, if the manuscript were referred to, would prove to be a misprint for "fiftieth." See on this subject an interesting, though somewhat sourly-written, paper, entitled "The Two Carlyles," signed "H. G. Graham," and printed in the *Athenæum* of May 14, 1881.

great goodness and condescension, the writer parted from him with warm thanks and a reciprocally cordial shake of the hand. It should be mentioned that during this walk Carlyle revoked his former refusal, and gave the writer free leave to print, with due discretion, whatever he might deem proper and necessary for his purpose, in the forthcoming book; but that early opuscule, whether luckily or unluckily, was shelved, for reasons one and another, by a too timid and cautious publisher, until by degrees three-fourths of its other contents were anticipated or forestalled; and the free and generous permission accorded by Carlyle could never be used until now.

Sixth interview.

The next day (Friday, 4th December), which happened to be his seventy-third birthday, the writer chanced to meet Carlyle again in Church-street, Chelsea, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. He had already been at the British Museum in the morning, and had succeeded in tracing the dates of the Irish papers in the *Examiner* and *Spectator*. Of this he now informed Carlyle, proposing at the same time to transcribe them, a project which he did not seem to encourage or to think worth the while, though as the careful reader learnt, at an earlier stage of this narrative, it was eventually carried out. We

walked together as far as Palace-gate House, Kensington, where his friend John Forster was then living, and there parted. Of the talk nothing can be remembered, with any certainty or definiteness. It seems to have turned partly upon Indian affairs. Carlyle pronounced a warm eulogium on Warren Hastings, and alluded contemptuously to Sheridan as an Irish mountebank.

Other interviews from 1869 to 1873.

Many other mornings, afternoons and nights followed, during the next five years, when the writer was privileged to walk with Carlyle and to hear his wonderful talk. The notes preserved, however, are too scanty to be elaborated into any distinct record of each separate meeting; and the reader is already tired, probably, of these minute personal details. After the year 1873, through his failing health and strength, this inestimable intercourse had to grow less frequent, and gradually to cease. Carlyle was no longer able to walk much; and in his rarer and more limited midnight rambles he was generally accompanied by his niece, who was now established as his housekeeper and companion at Cheyne Row.

On December 6, 1868, Carlyle, having been asked before the expiration of his term of Rec-

torial office to deliver a farewell address to the Edinburgh students, wrote a beautiful letter in which he excused himself under the circumstances from the performance of that task, and took a solemn and affectionate leave of the young men who had chosen him. As the letter is printed in the latest edition of Carlyle's *Miscellanies*, at the end of the Inaugural Address, it is not necessary to reproduce it here.

The two following letters were addressed early in 1869 to two correspondents who had sent him their books. The first is in acknowledgment of *Le Drame de Waterloo*, sent to him by the author, M. Piérart.*

"To M. Piérart.

"Chelsea, London,
"18th January 1869.

"Dear Sir,

"I duly received you *Drame de Waterloo*, and have to return you my thanks for your kindness in that matter.

"I have read the book with not a little interest: it brings before me again with a strange

* Piérart (Z. J.) *Le Drame de Waterloo: grande Restitution Historique, rectifications, justifications, réfutations, souvenirs, éclaircissements, &c., sur la Campagne de 1815, par l'Auteur de la Grande Epopée de l'An II.* Paris, 1868.

vividness, and with a new precision and certainty of details, the final scenes of a very great 'drama,' which acted itself in my young mind fifty years ago, and is still one of the new epochs of the world's history.

"I recognise especially your love of accuracy and certainty, your great outlay of research and studious examination, laborious reading of documents, otherwise repulsive rather than interesting;—and in result I can report to you my clear conviction:

"1. That Napoleon's campaign ended in four days so tragically for him, by Napoleon's own mismanagement, by the fact, which you have rendered evident, that he was *hébété*, sunk in somnolence, negligence, and not himself any more.

"2. That in subsequent times he, with unconscious and now and then with conscious mendacity, endeavoured to lay the blame on others—Grouchy, Ney, &c., and has now, as his fate was, been convicted of that sad offence, and will have to pay the penalty before the whole world.

"In young years, especially in the Hudson Lowe time, I was greatly an admirer of the Great Napoleon; but I confess, for a long while back, the essential mendacity, egoism, char-

latanism, of his procedure and relation to the world, have been more and more apparent to me, and the greatness of him, even as a soldier, been steadily diminishing. 'A great General?' as Kleber said: 'Ah, yes! a very great General —a General of 10,000 a month! *Ce petit coquin*, no bigger than my boot!'

"With many thanks and good wishes,

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

The following was addressed to the author of a book entitled *The Temple of Isis*:—

"Chelsea, 19th January 1869.

"DEAR SIR,

"At last I receive your pamphlet: and have read it with what attention and appreciation I could bestow. Considerable faculties of mind are manifested in it: powers of intellect, of imagination; a serious earnest character; here and there a tone of sombre eloquence, and vestiges of real literary skill. But my constant regret was, and is, to see such powers operating in a field palpably chaotic, and lying beyond the limits of man's intelligence. These are not

thoughts which you give; they are huge gaunt vacant dreams, for ever incapable, by nature, of being either affirmed or denied. My clear advice, therefore, would be, Give up all that; refuse to employ your intellect on things where no intellect can avail; to sow good seeds on realms of mere cloud and shadow. The highest intellect which issues in no certainty has completely failed. The world of practice and fact is the true arena for its inhabitants; wide enough for any or for all intellects of men; and never lay more encumbered with sordid darkness and pernicious delusions than even now. Real intellect might write with advantage on such things; better still, perhaps, it might remain silent, and bend its whole force on illuminating one's own poor path in such a wilderness; on more and more clearly ascertaining, for at least one earnest man, What to do, and How to do it. Probably you will not adopt this advice, almost certainly not at once; nor shall that disaffect me at all. Your tract I found throughout to be rather pleasant reading, and to have a certain interest; nothing in it, except one small section, treating of a thing I never mention, unless when compelled—the thing which calls itself 'Spiritualism' (which might more fitly be called 'Ultra-Brutalism,' and

'Liturgy of Dead-Sea Apes')—was disagreeable to me.

"Yours, with many good wishes,

"T. CARLYLE."

Here is a letter of condolence to Professor Syme on the occasion of a bereavement similar to his own :—

"Chelsea, February 5, 1869.

"DEAR MR. SYME,

"My heart is sore for you, ever since that lamentable news arrived. Oh, what a loss, what a loss!—the brightness of your life, as it were, suddenly extinguished, — changed into mournful memories,—unspeakably mournful,—though, by degrees (if you could believe me) beautiful too, and even blessed! A loss to you meanwhile which is immeasurable and irremediable. Alas! alas! I myself, little did I think it was the last I was to see of that bright, affectionate, beneficent and noble spirit in this world.

To Professor Syme.

"I judge well you will rally yourself, and bear in silence, like a brave man, the inexorable and inevitable; but it is sore to flesh and blood. May God bless you and keep you!

"Words of condolence, I know sufficiently,

are idle, often almost worse, and I will add no more of them. I wished you to understand that perhaps no one of your many friends more deeply sympathises in this saddest of events.

"Yours ever truly,

"T. CARLYLE."

A week later Carlyle writes thus to his friend Thomas Erskine, of Linlathen :—

"Chelsea, 12th February 1869.

"DEAR MR. ERSKINE,

To Thomas Erskine, of Linlathen.

"I was most agreeably surprised by the sight of your handwriting again, so kind, so welcome! The letters are as firm and honestly distinct as ever;—the mind, too, in spite of its frail *environments*, as clear, *plumb-up*, calmly expectant as in the best days: right so; *so* be it with us all, till we quit this dim sojourn, now grown so lonely to us, and our change come! "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy will be done;"—what else can we say? The other night, in my sleepless tossings about, which were growing more and more miserable, these words, that brief and grand Prayer, came strangely into my mind, with an altogether new emphasis; as if *written*, and shining for me in mild pure splendour, on the

black bosom of the Night there; when I, as it were, *read* them word by word,—with a sudden check to my imperfect wanderings, with a sudden softness of composure, which was much unexpected. Not for perhaps thirty or forty years had I once formally repeated that Prayer;—nay, I never felt before how intensely the voice of man's soul it is; the inmost aspiration of all that is high and pious in poor human nature; right worthy to be recommended with an 'After this manner pray ye.'

"I am very thankful that you went to see poor Betty; she is one of the most venerable human figures now known to me in the world. I called there, the first thing after my bit of surgery in the neighbourhood, end of July last; I seemed to have only one other *visit* to make in all Scotland,—and I made only *one*. The sight of poor Betty, mournful as it is, and full of mournfullest memories to me, always does me good. So far as I could any way learn, she is well enough in her humble thrifty *economics*, etc.: if otherwise at any time I believe you understand that help from this quarter would be a *sacred* duty to me.

"I am still able to walk, though I do it on compulsion merely, and without pleasure except as in work *done*. It is a great sorrow that *you*

now get fatigued so soon, and have not your old privilege in this respect;—I only hope you perhaps do not quite so indispensably need it as I; with me it is the key to *sleep*, and in fact the one medicine (often ineffectual, and now gradually oftener) that I ever could discover for this poor clay tabernacle of mine. I still keep working, after a weak sort; but can now do little, often almost nothing;—all my little "work" is henceforth *private* (as I calculate); a setting of my poor house in order; which I would fain finish *in time*, and occasionally fear I shan't. Dear Mr. Erskine, good be ever with you. Were my hand *as little* shaky as it is to-day, I would write to you oftener. A word *from* you will ever be welcome here!

"Yours sincerely and much,

"T. CARLYLE."

The year 1869 was mainly occupied by Carlyle in the arrangement and revision for the press of the Library Edition of his Works.

To the month of January 1870 belong two interesting letters; the first addressed to Professor Daniel Wilson, of Toronto, in acknowledgment of his Life of Chatterton.*

* *Chatterton: a Biographical Study.* By Daniel Wilson, LL.D., Professor of History and English in University College, Toronto. London: Macmillan and Co., 1869, pp. xiv. 328.

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"10th January 1870.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Accept many thanks for your volume on Chatterton, which I received two or three days after your letter, and have read with unusual interest and attention.

To Professor Daniel Wilson.

"The narrative, in spite of its abstruse and much obscured subject, is at once clear and concise; and throws an unexpected illumination upon Chatterton. Indeed it is the first time I have fairly been able to understand what Chatterton and his affairs really were. To sympathetic minds it is a deep and painful tragedy; and to all minds it is a wonderful physiological prodigy,—in which latter sense at least it may long have its interest among mankind.

"Beyond doubt you are abundantly sympathetic to the poor boy; and his fate and history are indeed sad in the extreme. But I had here and there a feeling withal that perhaps he was incapable of being saved; that besides these lamentable obstructions of his childhood there was something wrong in the original conformation of him. Too much of vehemence and violence for any piety and loyalty he had;—clearly a considerable want

Chatterton.

of *reverence*, and an enormous overplus of mere ambition and egoism? — I remark too in his marvellously precocious poetry far more of shining *colour* and grandiloquent *sound* than of any finer spiritual element:—in short, one has a feeling that perhaps his thrice-miserable death at that early stage may have been the *least* miserable ending for him. Poor boy, poor erring, struggling. vainly-soaring brother mortal, what a dismal, painful bit of human history however that may be!

"I remember well your pleasant visit here, and also my reading of your former book. With myself much is mournfully changed since then, but not my goodwill towards you and such as you.

"Believe me,
"Yours sincerely,
"T. CARLYLE."

"Professor D. Wilson, &c. &c.,
"Toronto."

Mr. John Kelso Hunter, whose *Retrospect of an Artist's Life* is the "pleasant volume" referred to in the ensuing letter, was born at Dankeith, parish of Symington, Ayrshire, 15th December 1802, and died at Pollokshields,

near Glasgow, Monday, February 3, 1873. Originally a cobbler, and afterwards an amateur portrait-painter, he did not take to writing till he was turned sixty. The success of his first effort, which, through the praise of Mr. Carlyle, was widely circulated, encouraged him to bring out in 1870 a second volume, *Life-Sketches of Character*, which threw light on the heroes and heroines of Burns, &c. He was entirely a self-taught artist. A portrait of himself as a cobbler, found a place at the Royal Academy.

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"14th January 1870.

"DEAR SIR,

"Many weeks ago I should have thanked you for the pleasant volume you were kind enough to send me. My excuse is, I have been in weak health, am occupied with many things, and have a growing aversion and inability to the act of writing.

"Your book is not a very serious one, but it is a swift and flowing, full of good humour throughout—of *canny* shrewdness, too, with a subdued vein of just satire perceptible, like a suspicion of good cognac in a wholesome tumbler of new milk. I can say that it throws an

authentic straggle of illumination over actual Scottish life in our generation, and pleasantly reminds me of what I knew so well long ago,—that the *photograph* of that briskly peaceable, contented, and independent shoemaker awakens nothing but good-will in me, and that I have known many thousands of books which cost far more trouble and were *less* deserving of being written.

"Believe me yours,

"With hearty thanks and good wishes,

"T. CARLYLE.

"Mr. John Kelso Hunter,

"Gourock, near Greenock."

On the 23rd of January (1870), Mr. Forster tells us, for the last time Carlyle met Dickens. Five months later, after Dickens's sudden and premature death, an event which filled all England and all the world with sorrow, as well as his friends and kindred,—"among the consolations addressed to those mourners came words from one whom in life he had most honoured, and who also found it difficult to connect him with death, or to think that he should never see that blithe face any more. 'It is almost thirty years,'

Carlyle and Dickens.

Carlyle wrote, 'since my acquaintance with him began; and on my side, I may say, every new meeting ripened it into more and more clear discernment of his rare and great worth as a brother man: a most cordial, sincere, clear-sighted, quietly decisive, just and loving man: till at length he had grown to such a recognition with me as I have rarely had for any man of my time. This I can tell you three, for it is true and will be welcome to you: to others less concerned I had as soon *not* speak on such a subject." "I am profoundly sorry for *you*," Carlyle wrote to Mr. Forster (11th June 1870), "and indeed for myself and for us all. It is an event world-wide; a *unique* of talents suddenly extinct; and has 'eclipsed,' we too may say, 'the harmless gaiety of nations.' No death since 1866 has fallen on me with such a stroke. No literary man's hitherto ever did. The good, the gentle, high-gifted, ever-friendly, noble Dickens,—every inch of him an honest man." *

Carlyle on the death of Dickens: 4th July 1870.

The war between France and Germany which now broke out and produced such rapid and utter disaster to the French armies, and the

* Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens*, vol. iii. (1874).

Carlyle on the French-German war.

overthrow of the Second Empire, was in its results a source of supreme satisfaction to Carlyle, realising in its practical events and issue the whole tendency of his later historic teaching. Besides his famous letter on the subject, which appeared in the *Times* of November 18th, 1870, and is republished in the latest edition of his *Miscellanies*, two other utterances of his on the matter, one of earlier and one of later date, appeared in print at the time, and are well worthy of preservation. In the autumn of the year the *Weimar Gazette* published a few extracts from a letter written by Carlyle, with reference to the war, in which he says:—

"Your anxieties about the war must have been of short duration; in fact, they must after the first few days' practical experience have been changed into bright hope, into a hope increasing in rapid geometrical progression till it obtained its present dimensions. So far as my reading goes there never was such a war, never such a collapse of shameless human vanity, of menacing, long-continued arrogance, into contemptible nothingness. Blow has followed blow as if from the hammer of Thor, till it lies like a shapeless heap of ruins, whining to itself, 'In the name of all the gods and all

the devils, what is to become of us?' All Germany may now look forward to happier days in a political sense than it has seen since the Emperor Barbarossa left it. My individual satisfaction in all this is great, and all England, I can say all the intelligent in England, heartily wish good fortune to brave old Germany in what it has accomplished—a real transformation into one nation, no longer the chaotic jumble which invited the intrusion of every ill-disposed neighbour, especially of that ill-disposed France which has inflicted on it such interminable mischief during the last four hundred years—wars heaped upon wars, without real cause, except insatiable French ambition. All that, through God's grace, is now at an end. I have, in my time, seen nothing in Europe which has so much delighted me. 'A brave people,' as your Goethe calls them, and, as I believe, a peaceful and a virtuous one. I only hope that Heaven will send them the wisdom, patience, and pious discretion to turn to a right use all that has been achieved."

The following letter was written to a certain Herr Waldmüller, who was with the German army of invasion, in acknowledgment of the book mentioned in it:—

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"27th December 1870.

"SIR,

"Three nights ago there came to me from Dresden a beautiful little blue book, *Die tausendjährige Eiche in Elsass*, which—especially as coupled with your kind inscription on the cover of it, bearing date 'vor Paris'—I read with very great interest. It is in itself truly a beautiful little book, put together with a great deal of art, and betokening in the writer a delicate, affectionate, poetic, and gifted human brother, well skilled in literary composition—not to speak of still higher things. Nowhere have I seen a more ingenious arrangement of whatever was bright and human in an antiquarian study into a really living and artistic form than this of Elsass and its 'Thousand Years' Oak!' That a soul capable of such work should now date to me from 'Le Vert Galant,' and the heart of a great and terrible World-event, supremely beneficent and yet supremely terrible, upon which all Europe is waiting with abated breath, is another circumstance which adds immensely to the interest of the kind gift for me; and I may well keep the little book in careful preservation as a memorial to me of what will be memorable

To Herr Waldmüller.

to all the world for another "thousand years." I wished much to convey some hint of my feeling to you, as at once the writer of such a piece, and the worker and fighter in such a world; and I try to contrive some way of doing so. Alas! my wishes can do little for you or for your valiant comrades, nobly fronting the storms of war and of winter; but if this ever reach you, let it be an assurance that I do in my heart praise you (and might even in a sort, if I were a German and still young, envy you), and that no man, in Germany or out of it, more deeply applauds the heroic, invincible bearing of your comrades and you, or more entirely wishes and augurs a glorious result to it at the appointed hour. My faith is that a *good* genius does guide you, that Heaven itself approves what you are doing, that in the end Victory is sure to you. Accept an old man's blessing; continue to quit yourselves like men, and in that case expect that a *good* issue is beyond the reach of Fortune and her inconstancies. God be with you, dear sir, with you and your brave brethren in arms.

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

The following letter was written by Carlyle to a medical student who had been a prominent

supporter of his candidature for the Rectorship of Edinburgh University, and who had written to him requesting an expression of his opinion in regard to the entrance of women into the medical profession.

"5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"9th February 1871.

"DEAR SIR,

"It is with reluctance that I write anything to you on this subject of Female Emancipation, which is now rising to such a height. The truth is, the topic for five-and-twenty years past, especially for the last three or four, has been a mere sorrow to me; one of the most afflicting proofs of the miserable anarchy that prevails in human society, and I have avoided thinking of it, except when fairly compelled: what little has become clear to me on it I will now endeavour to tell you.

The function of woman.

"In the first place, then, I have never doubted that the true and noble function of a woman in this world was, is, and forever will be, that of being a wife and helpmate to a worthy man; and discharging well the duties that devolve on her in consequence, as mother of children and mistress of a household,—duties high, noble,

silently important as any that can fall to a human creature; duties which, if well discharged, constitute Woman, in a soft, beautiful and almost sacred way, the Queen of the World; and by her natural faculties, graces, strengths, and weaknesses, are every way indicated as specifically hers. The true destiny of a woman, therefore, is to wed a man she can love and esteem; and to lead noiselessly under his protection, with all the wisdom, grace, and heroism that is in her, the life prescribed in consequence.

"It seems, furthermore, indubitable that if a woman miss this destiny or have renounced it, she has every right, before God and man, to take up whatever honest employment she can find open to her in the world. Probably there are several or many employments, now exclusively in the hands of men, for which women might be more or less fit;—printing, tailoring, weaving, clerking, &c. &c. That Medicine is intrinsically not unfit for them is proved from the fact that in much more sound and earnest ages than ours, before the medical profession rose into being, they were virtually the physicians and surgeons as well as sick nurses,—all that the world had. Their form of intellect, their sympathy, their

Study of medicine.

wonderful acuteness of observation, &c., seem to indicate in them peculiar qualities for dealing with disease; and evidently in certain departments (that of female disease) they have quite peculiar opportunities of being useful. My answer to your question, then, may be that two things are not doubtful to me in this matter.

"1. That women—any woman who deliberately so determines—have a right to study Medicine; and that it might be profitable and serviceable to have facilities, or at least possibilities, offered them for so doing. But

"2. That, for obvious reasons, female students of Medicine ought to have, if possible, female teachers, or else an extremely select kind of men; and, in particular, that to have young women present among young men in anatomical classes, clinical lectures, or generally studying Medicine in concert, is an incongruity of the first magnitude, and shocking to think of to every pure and modest mind.

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

In 1872-1873 appeared by instalments in thirty-seven volumes the People's Edition of Carlyle's

Works. Like the Library Edition, the text of which it reproduced, it was carefully superintended by the author himself. It was a great boon to the readers of Carlyle all over the world, and especially to those whose purses were limited; the surprising cheapness (it was published at the low rate of two shillings per volume), combined with such excellence of paper, typography and binding, being only rendered possible by the enormously large sale the edition commanded.

People's Edition of Carlyle's Works.

To the Miscellanies some slight additions were made at the end of the last volume; and to the *Life of Schiller* a very important one. To this little volume a lengthy Supplement was added (the prefatory note to which is dated "Chelsea, November 1872"), founded on Saupe's *Schiller and his Father's Household*, and other more recent books on Schiller that had appeared in Germany, and outweighing tenfold in value the original work to which it was appended. This is the choicest and most beautiful little piece written by Carlyle during the last decade of his life—a diamond of the first water. There is a mellow evening radiance about it which gives it a peculiar charm. The account of Schiller's three sisters, and specially that of Nanette—has a

Supplement to *Life of Schiller*.

divine depth of tenderness and pathos, of serene melancholy wisdom.

The following is an acknowledgment of Herr Moser's Commentary on Faust, which the author had sent to Carlyle through a friend, and is peculiarly interesting as being his last utterance on Goethe :—

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"Sept. 20, 1873.

"DEAR SIR,

"Several weeks ago I received from you at Dumfries Herr Moser's ingenious little book; which, in the hurries and confusions then about me, I neglected to acknowledge at the moment. Accept now my thanks for your kind punctuality in regard to that matter.

Moser's commentary on Goethe's *Faust*.

"I have since deliberately read over Mr. Moser's little book, with agreeable recognition of much talent, diligence and fine intellectual faculty in the same; but am sorry to report likewise (sorry in one sense, and yet relieved and gratified in another,) that I can find in those amazing footnotes of Mr. M. no clear credibility whatever, nor certainly the least *explanation* of anything that is mysterious in *Faust*, part II. or part I;—and indeed am astonished that a person

of Mr. M.'s good sense and extensive information should have thought of representing Goethe's high and clear mind as ever grovelling into those base and cynical provinces of human life, from which in all his other writings he is conspicuously, healthily and nobly free. In the *final* scenes of *Faust*, from p. 224 and onwards of Mr. Moser's book, I have found the illustrations perfectly credible, and have gratefully accepted the elucidation they yield. His preliminary excerpts, his epilogue, and indeed all these portions of his book have been new and interesting to me: they have moreover led me into a renewed perusal of this Second Part of *Faust*, and into an examination for the first time (though hitherto with little profit) of what the German doctors have found good to utter on the subject; a process which is yet by no means concluded on my part.

"For all this I am clearly indebted to Mr. Moser; and I beg you will thank him very kindly for his goodness in sending me this book, the results of which may be of more advantage to me than we yet see; and which at any rate I cannot but accept as a proof of his kind regard.

"Believe me, Dear Sir,

"Yours also with thanks,

"T. CARLYLE."

On the completion of Mr. Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens*, early in 1874, Carlyle wrote thus to that highly-valued and gifted friend on the subject of his book :—

Carlyle on Forster's Life of Dickens.

"This Third Volume throws a new light and character to me over the work at large. I incline to consider this Biography as taking rank, in essential respects, parallel to Boswell himself, though on widely different grounds. Boswell, by those genial abridgements and vivid face-to-face pictures of Johnson's thoughts, conversational ways and modes of appearance among his fellow-creatures, has given, as you often hear me say, such a delineation of a man's existence as was never given by another man. By quite different resources, by those sparkling, clear and sunny utterances of Dickens's own (bits of *auto*-biography unrivalled in clearness and credibility) which were at your disposal, and have been intercalated every now and then, you have given to every intelligent eye the power of looking down at the very bottom of Dickens's mode of existing in this world; and I say have performed a feat which, except in Boswell, the unique, I know not where to parallel. So long as Dickens is interesting to his fellow-men, here will be seen

face to face, what Dickens's manner of existing was. His bright and joyful sympathy with everything around him; his steady practicality, withal; the singularly solid business talent he continually had; and, deeper than all, if one has the eye to see deep enough, dark, fateful, silent elements, tragical to look upon, and hiding, amid dazzling radiances as of the sun, the elements of death itself. Those two American journeys especially transcend in tragic interest, to a thinking reader, most things one has seen in writing!

"16 February 1874."

Alas! alas! within two brief years of the date of that well-merited eulogium, the most accomplished biographer of his time, who might (one always hoped) have survived to have become Carlyle's biographer too, was himself summoned away. Carlyle lost one of the oldest, most cherished, and most faithful of his literary friends, and the world of letters lost in John Forster the only man worthy and capable of writing the life of Thomas Carlyle, as it should have been, and as it will never now be written.

CHAPTER XI.

LAST LITERARY PRODUCTIONS.—EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY.—GOLD MEDAL AND ADDRESS.—LAST POLITICAL UTTERANCES IN THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.—DEATH.

(1875–1881.)

CARLYLE'S last literary productions were a series of papers on "The Early Kings of Norway" and an essay on the "Portraits of John Knox," which appeared in instalments in *Fraser's Magazine* in the first four months of 1875, and afterwards in a volume, so that the periodical which published some of his earliest writings published also his latest.

Early Kings of Norway.

On the 4th December 1875 Carlyle attained his eightieth year, and this anniversary was signalised by some of the more distinguished of his friends

Eightieth Birthday.

and admirers by striking a medal, the head being executed by Mr. Boehm, whose noble statue of Carlyle, exhibited in the Royal Academy in the previous May, had won so much merited praise from Mr. Ruskin and others. The medal was accompanied by an address, signed by the subscribers. Carlyle seems to have been much gratified with this honour, which took him quite by surprise, and he expressed his acknowledgments as follows :—

The Medal and Address.

"This of the medal and formal address of friends was an altogether unexpected event, to be received as a conspicuous and peculiar honour, without example hitherto anywhere in my life. To you I address my thankful acknowledgments, which surely are deep and sincere, and will beg you to convey the same to all the kind friends so beautifully concerned in it. Let no one of you be other than assured that the beautiful transaction, in result, management, and intention, was altogether gratifying, welcome, and honourable to me, and that I cordially thank one and all of you for what you have been pleased to do. Your fine and noble gift shall remain among my precious possessions, and be the symbol to me of something still more *golden* than itself, on the part of my many dear

and too generous friends, so long as I continue in this world.

"Yours and theirs, from the heart,

"T. CARLYLE."

In November 1876, Carlyle was tempted by a friend to give utterance to his opinion on the Eastern Crisis. The following letter was addressed to Mr. George Howard, and printed in the *Times* of November 28, 1876:—

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea,
"24th Nov., 1876.

"DEAR HOWARD,

"It by no means seems so evident to me as it does to you and your friends that an utterance of my opinion on the Eastern Crisis could be important; but since you assure me that it might be of service to many persons now in doubt on that matter, I overcome the very great reluctance I had to speak of the subject at all, and will try to indicate summarily what my own poor private views upon it are.

"In the first place, then, for fifty years back my clear belief about the Russians has been that they are a good and even noble element in Europe. Conspicuously they possess the talent of obedience, of silently following orders given;

which, in the universal celebration of ballot-box, divine freedom, &c., will be found an invaluable and peculiar gift. Ever since Peter the Great's appearance among them, they have been in steady progress of development. In our own time they have done signal service to God and man in drilling into order and peace anarchic populations all over their side of the world. The present Czar of Russia I judge to be a strictly honest and just man:—and in short my belief is that the Russians are called to do great things in the world, and to be a conspicuous benefit, directly and indirectly, to their fellow men.

"To undertake a war against Russia on behalf of the Turk, it is evident to me would be nothing short of insanity; and has become, we may fondly hope, impossible for any Minister, or Prime Minister, that exists among us. Twenty years ago we already had a mad war in defence of the Turk; a mass of the most hideous and tragic stupidity, mismanagement, and disaster (in spite of bravest fighting) that England was ever concerned in since I knew it; a hundred millions of money and above sixty thousand valiant lives were spent in the enterprise. By Treaties of Paris, &c., the Turk was preserved intact; bind himself only to reform his system of government,

which certainly of all things in the world needed reform. And now, after twenty years of waiting, the Turk is found to have reformed nothing, nor attempted to reform anything. Not to add that by bankrupt finance he has swallowed a disastrous tribute of many new millions from the widows and orphans of England. As finis to all which, he has wound up by the horrors of Bulgaria, and such savageries as are without a parallel. With these weighty aggravations, the Turkish Question returns upon us anew, and demands a solution.

"It seems to me that something very different from war on his behalf is what the Turk now pressingly needs from England and from all the world; namely, to be peremptorily informed that we can stand no more of his attempts to govern in Europe, and that he must *quam primùm* turn his face to the eastward, for ever quit this side of the Hellespont, and give up his arrogant ideas of governing anybody but himself.

"Such immediate and summary expulsion of the Turk from Europe may appear to many a too drastic remedy; but to my mind it is the only one of any real validity under the circumstances. Improved management of these unhappy countries might begin on the morrow after this long-continued curse was withdrawn, and the ground

left free for wise and honest human effort. The peaceful Mongol inhabitants would, of course, be left in peace, and treated with perfect equity, and even friendly consideration; but the governing Turk, with all his Pachas and Bashi-Bazouks, should at once be ordered to disappear from Europe and never to return.

"This result is in the long run inevitable, and it were better to set about it now than to temporise and haggle in the vain hope of doing it cheaper some other time.

"As to the temporary or preparatory government of the recovered provinces, cleared of their unspeakable Turk (government for twenty, or say any other term of years), our own experience in India may prove that it is possible, and in a few faithful and skilful hands is even easy. Nor in the temper of the Czar and of the Austrian Emperor need the fair partition of these recovered territories be a cause of quarrel. Austria must expect to become more and more a Sclavic and Hungarian Empire, her nine millions of Germans more and more gravitating towards their countrymen of the great German Empire. The Czar, whose serious task it is to protect the Christian subjects in Turkey proper, will justly have a claim to territorial footing in the recovered country. To England there is one vital

interest, and only one, that of securing its road to India, which depends on Egypt and the Suez Canal.

"The thing to be desired is concord among the three Great Powers; and if, as we do hope, there is a mutual trust grounded on honesty of intention on the part of each, none claiming more than in the nature of things belongs to him, we may confidently expect that the difficulties of the business cannot prove insuperable. It seems to me the advice of Prince Bismarck, a magnanimous, noble, and deep-seeing man, who has no national aims or interests in the matter, might be very valuable; nay, were he appointed arbiter where difficult dissidences arose, what but benefit would be likely to result? But on this portion of the subject I am not called to write.

"The only clear advice I have to give is, as I have stated, that the unspeakable Turk should be immediately struck out of the question, and the country left to honest European guidance; delaying which can be profitable or agreeable only to gamblers on the Stock Exchange, but distressing and unprofitable to all other men.

"I remain always, dear Howard,

"Yours truly,

"T. CARLYLE.

"G. Howard, Esq."

The following letter to the *Times* "on the Crisis," printed in that journal on May 5, 1877, was Carlyle's last public utterance of any import:—

To the Editor of the Times.

"SIR,

"A rumour everywhere prevails that our miraculous Premier, in spite of his Queen's Proclamation of Neutrality, intends, under cover of 'care for British interests,' to send the English Fleet to the Baltic, or do some other feat which shall compel Russia to declare war against England. Latterly the rumour has shifted from the Baltic and become still more sinister, on the eastern side of the scene, where a feat is contemplated that will force not Russia only, but all Europe, to declare war against us. This latter I have come to know as an indisputable fact; in our present affairs and outlooks surely a grave one.

Lord Beaconsfield.

"As to 'British interests,' there is none visible or conceivable to me, except taking strict charge of our route to India by Suez and Egypt; and, for the rest, resolutely steering altogether clear of any copartnery with the Turk in regard to this or any other 'British interest' whatever. It should be felt by England as a real ignominy

to be connected with such a Turk at all. Nay, if we still had, as in fact all ought to have, a wish to save him from perdition and annihilation in God's world, the one future for him that has any hope in it is even now that of being conquered by the Russians, and gradually schooled and drilled into peaceable attempt at learning to be himself governed. The newspaper outcry against Russia is no more respectable to me than the howling of Bedlam, proceeding, as it does, from the deepest ignorance, egoism, and paltry national jealousy.

"These things I write not on hearsay, but on accurate knowledge, and to all friends of their country will recommend immediate attention to them while there is yet time, lest in a few weeks the maddest and most criminal thing that a British Government could do should be done, and all Europe kindle into flames of war.

"I am, &c.

"T. CARLYLE.

"5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea.
"May 4th."

Carlyle was now beginning to feel the effects of his great age. Yearly and monthly he grew more feeble. His wonted walking exercise had to be curtailed, and at last abandoned. He was

affectionately and piously tended during these last years by his niece, Mary Aitken, afterwards Mrs. Alexander Carlyle. In the autumn of 1879 he lost his brother, Dr. John Aitken Carlyle, the translator of *Dante's Inferno*.

Death of Thomas Carlyle.

The end came at last, after a long and gradual decay of strength. The great writer and noble-hearted man passed away peacefully at about half-past eight o'clock on the morning of Saturday, February 5th, 1881, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

His remains were conveyed to Scotland, and were laid on the following Thursday in the burial-ground at Ecclefechan, where the ashes of his father and mother, and of others of his kindred, repose.

Portraits of Carlyle.

It now remains to give some brief account of the portraits of Carlyle, of the Memoirs which have appeared since his death, and of some of the utterances which the posthumous publication of his *Reminiscences* has evoked. And first of the portraits.

1. The earliest known is that by Daniel Maclise, which forms one of the Fraser Gallery, and which appeared in the Magazine in June 1833. The original drawing is in the Forster Collection at South Kensington.

THE LATE JOHN AITKEN CARLYLE, M.D.

2. The next in point of date is the Sketch by Count D'Orsay, "published June 18, 1839, by J. Mitchell, 33 Old Bond Street."

3. A crayon drawing by Samuel Laurence, engraved by J. C. Armytage, and published in Horne's *New Spirit of the Age* in 1844.

4. Portrait;

5. An Interior at Chelsea;

by Mr. Tait. The former is now in the possession of Lady Ashburton.

6. Various photographs by Elliott and Fry, Watkins, and others.

7. Portrait in oil by G. F. Watts, R.A., now in the Forster Collection at South Kensington.

This portrait has been etched by Rajon: an engraving from it is prefixed to one of the volumes of the Library Edition of Carlyle's Works.

8. Photograph by Mrs. Cameron.

9. Bust and Medallion by Thomas Woolner.

10. A series of four Photographs by Mr. John Patrick of Wemyssfield, Kirkcaldy, N.B.

11. A series of coloured sketches by Mrs. Allingham, executed in the years 1875–1879. The earliest of these was engraved in *The Graphic*.

Exhibited at the Rooms of the Fine Art

Society, 148 New Bond Street, in the spring and summer of 1881.

12. Portrait by Legros.

13. Portrait by J. A. McNeill Whistler.

Exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery. Of Mr. Whistler's portrait an engraving has been published.

14. An Etching by M. Léon Richeton (17 in. by 12 in.) twenty-five Proofs, bearing as a remark a portrait of Mr. Carlyle in dry point, 100 Proofs.

Published by the Fine Art Society, 148 New Bond Street, Christmas 1879.

15. Terra Cotta Statue by J. E. Boehm.

Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1875. Engraved in the *Art Journal* in 1878. There are two photographs of it, from different points of view, taken by Mr. Hedderly, of Riley Street, Chelsea.

16. Medallion by J. E. Boehm.

Executed for the Presentation Medal, given to Mr. Carlyle on his eightieth birthday.

17. Caricature full-length Sketch in *Vanity Fair*.

18. Photograph by Prætorius (published by F. Bruckmann, 11 King Street, Covent Garden), 1876.

19. Thomas Carlyle at Home: A Series of Six Etchings by Howard Helmick.

20. There is said to be an unfinished portrait by Mr. Millais; but it has not been exhibited.

Since the death of Carlyle several hastily compiled Memoirs of him have appeared, possessing little or no literary merit, and disfigured by gross blunders in regard to facts, dates, names, and quotations. Among them may be enumerated:—

THOMAS CARLYLE. THE MAN AND HIS BOOKS. Illustrated by Personal Reminiscences, Table-Talk, and Anecdotes of himself and his friends. By William Howie Wylie. London: Marshall, Japp and Co., 1881, pp. viii., 402.

2. THOMAS CARLYLE. By Henry J. Nicoll, Edinburgh: 1881, pp. 248. Revised Edition with Additional Chapter, pp. 255.

An utterly worthless compilation (full of misprints, sometimes as many as six on a single page), of which the *data* and the very wording are mainly taken without acknowledgment from a brief Memoir prefixed by the present writer twelve years ago to an edition of Carlyle's Edinburgh Inaugural address. This volume, like a previous one by a Mr. Wace on Tennyson, is issued by certain worthy successors of Edmund Curll, and fit sponsors for such a double-distilled dunce and dullard as the author of it, who seem, like one of their confraternity in London,

whom Carlyle once described in one of his letters to the present writer, "to depend considerably on thieving, and to be ready to *steal* wherever there is no *gallows* to prevent."

Carlyle to R. H. S.

3. THOMAS CARLYLE: THE INCONOCLAST OF MODERN SHAMS. A Short Study of his Life and Writings. By Rev. John Wilson, M.A. Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1881, pp. vi. 151.

The posthumous publication of Carlyle's *Reminiscences* within a month of his death has let loose the tongues of a multitude of detractors. That so venerable, accomplished and amiable a lady as the relict of Barry Cornwall should have been ill-advised enough to write angry words in haste which must needs be repented at leisure, is lamentable and deplorable indeed. Her preface to the little collection of early Letters addressed by Carlyle to her mother and her husband hardly fills two pages, but every word of it seems steeped in gall and venom. It is sad that the affectionate intercourse of more than half-a-century should end thus.

The detractors of Carlyle.

Mrs. Procter on Carlyle.

The two great Reviews—that were once leaders of literary thought in England—simultaneously launched forth articles in which it

is difficult to say whether the absence of taste, of temper, of culture, of "sweetness and light," of scholarship, or of grammar, is most conspicuous. The *Edinburgh Review*, after professing at the outset to be "especially anxious to pay its tribute of personal respect and regard" to the memory of one of its most distinguished contributors, declares that "when we proceed to a closer examination of his writings and his opinions, we confess that we are astonished at the exaggerated estimate which has been formed of them." "He was singularly devoid of mental method and of logical power." "Much of his style might, without injustice, be said to consist of bad German translated into worse English." "These infirmities of temper had been greatly increased by the flattery lavished on him in his later years, *which he swallowed with avidity*."

The *Edinburgh Review*.

The *Quarterly Review* made a still more rabid attack. Virulence, rancour, and stupidity could go no further, were even Zoilus "crowned monarch of literature," as Carlyle once said. The article is garnished with a number of absurd and incredible anecdotes both of Carlyle and his wife, *e.g.* that on p. 426. On the next page is another choice anecdote of Carlyle and the Hon. Mrs.

The *Quarterly Review*.

Norton, equally credible, and the paper closes as follows:—"That his admirers should still think it right to raise busts or statues in his honour is their affair; but they are assuming a grave responsibility. They are sanctioning a false philosophy. They are setting up a false standard of excellence. They are doing their best to diffuse and perpetuate a baneful influence; to give authority and circulation to works composed for the most part in open defiance of good sense, good feeling, or good taste; works whose all-pervading tone, spirit and tendency are radically wrong."

Such is the verdict of the modern Zoilus: such will not be the verdict of those who have still eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to feel. Wisdom is justified of her children, and when the blind and base clamour of the hour is hushed, and calm succeeds again, the world will feel and know, as we feel and know, who now rise fresh from the study of his mind and life, that to Thomas Carlyle belonged one of the noblest hearts as well as one of the loftiest intelligences of which any record exists in the successive generations of mankind; and that we may all, if we will, be the better and the wiser because he once lived and wrought nobly in the world where we are still living and working.

CHAPTER XII.

FRENCH CRITICS OF CARLYLE.

Of all European peoples the French are the least able to understand the genius of Carlyle. They are equally repelled by each of his chief characteristics. His humour is of a kind that they are quite unable to appreciate, and it pervades all his books, even the great histories. To its broader touches the Frenchmen of the time of Rabelais might indeed have been awake, and the contemporaries of Montaigne could have enjoyed its fineness. Quite as opulent as that of Rabelais, and much purer; as delicate as that of Montaigne, and much deeper and truer; the humour of Carlyle awakes no response in modern France.

His literary style, too, is much against his

acceptance there. Perhaps no other writer who could be said to approach him in imaginative power (for no modern can rival him), had so little sense of form as Carlyle. Had he possessed the gift of song he would, said Mr. Lowell, have been the greatest epic poet since Homer. But all conception of rhythm was strikingly absent from his mind. It is noticeable in the introduction to *Peter Nimmo*, how complete, even at that early period, is his mastery over prose. He is able to express just what he means; but no sooner does he pass into verse than all is cramped and uneasy. *Peter Nimmo* is, indeed, one of his least happy attempts in poetry. Some of his other verses show much more command of *technique*. But between his best verses and his least-studied prose there is a difference which is quite amazing, and which shows conclusively his own deficiency as regards sense of form.

Carlyle's literary style.

This is one of the most striking points of contrast between Carlyle and his master Goethe. The great German could express himself with equal ease through any medium. The rapid movement and picturesqueness of *Goetz von Berlichingen*, the limpid prose of *Wilhelm Meister*, the classicism of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the idyllic

Carlyle and Goethe.

softness of *Hermann und Dorothea*, the narrative style of the *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, the alternate romance, terror, scoffing and despair of *Faust*—all were equally natural to the most widely receptive of modern writers. But with Carlyle all this was different. He was always himself. His style is the most individual of any writer of this century. He is a moralist, not an artist; and though at times he partially adopts the artistic method, he cannot long bear the restraint, and soon obtrudes his own individuality. "Truth," said one of his critics, "is with him not so much a majestic vision, as an element to mould the character and rule the will. Carlyle does not rest in it—paint, sing, or prove it; but breathes, moves, fights and dies for it." This lack of form on his own part (he was well able to appreciate form in others, though he always valued a man more for what he said than for the way in which he said it,) militates strongly against his reception among the Latin races. His intensely strong Teutonic sympathies also shut him out from the admiration of many Frenchmen. When one has mentioned his humour, his literary style, and his German proclivities, one has named three of Carlyle's chief peculiarities, and on none of these points does he command the sympathy or

interest of the French. The deeper elements of his mind—his stern morality, his conceptions of life and of the government of the world, his decided Calvinistic leanings—are equally alien to the French intellect.

Carlyle in France.

It was impossible, however, that the English historian of the French Revolution should remain entirely unknown in France. In some of the French periodicals—notably in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*—there have appeared from time to time criticisms on Carlyle, varying in ability and differing in their degrees of sympathy. We propose to lay before our readers passages from some of these, with the view of showing what has been thought and said of Carlyle by some of the leaders of French opinion, and also in the hope that by examining our great English writer with foreign eyes we may detect blemishes or beauties which we had perhaps before failed to notice.

The first criticism we select for examination was published by the late M. Chasles* in the

* Victor Euphémion Philarète Chasles was born 8 October 1798, and died at Venice 18 July 1873. He was a prolific contributor to the journals and reviews, became keeper of the *Bibliothèque Mazarine* in 1837, and Professor at the College of France in 1841. He was a man of very varied knowledge, and his collected articles formed matter for twenty volumes of *Études de Littérature Comparée*. His paper on Carlyle appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for 1st October 1840, 4th series, vol. xxiv., pp. 109-126.

Revue des Deux Mondes in 1840. It is professedly a review of *The French Revolution*, but it aims at also giving the reader a general idea of the character of Carlyle's writings. On the tendencies of English literature, and Carlyle's relation to them, M. Chasles has these observations:—

Philarète Chasles on Carlyle.

"English style passed, in the sixteenth century, through the phases of imitation of Italian and Spanish, and in the seventeenth, those of French, Greek and Latin. At the end of the eighteenth it returned suddenly to its Anglo-Saxon point of departure. This return to its origin gave it the extraordinary power, the masculine or *naïve* beauty which distinguishes the poets and prose writers of the epoch immediately preceding our own. Byron, Scott, Southey, Cobbett, Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, Wordsworth, whatever might have been the diversities of their minds, strove eagerly after the freshness and the power of the ancient English diction; with some writers, such as Leigh Hunt, Keats, and Shelley, the affectation of archaism obscured their fine qualities. Men are so made that they cannot help imitating something. Having exhausted the copying of ancient Greece, of Italy, of Spain, of France, and of the national archaism, there remained

for England only one other imitation to attempt, that of Germany. Already Coleridge, Walter Scott, and Wordsworth had borrowed from that country, not indeed the forms, but fictions or theories. No one, however, had yet attempted to connect Anglo- with primitive Saxon, and to weld the particular and distinct character of the German idiom with that of English which is derived from it. . . . A profound study of German poetry and philosophy had prepared Carlyle for the creation of the new Anglo-German style which is associated with him." To an Englishman it must be evident that our critic has now come to the end of his facts, and we cannot accept the inference which he wishes us to draw from what he has already said. In the cases he has cited he has not gone further than the facts warrant. The periods in English literary style to which he has alluded are distinct and acknowledged ones, but Carlyle has inaugurated no new period. "Le nouveau style anglo-allemand" was used by Carlyle, but by no one else. His individuality was so intense that it had to create a new dialect to find expression; but no one else can use that dialect without becoming at once a common imitator of another man's speech. Indeed it would be difficult to name any other great master of literature who

has had so little influence on the literary style of his epoch. Carlyle showed new possibilities in the English language, but no one can avail himself of them. Coming to the real subject in hand, Carlyle's work on the French Revolution, M. Chasles says :—

"To *Sartor Resartus* succeeded an essay called *The Diamond Necklace*, a philosophic romance for which the famous adventure of the necklace served as a pretext, but which had for its aim the unfolding of the immediate causes of the French Revolution. It was divided into chapters, all very brilliant, some grotesque. It was a great success, and it was without doubt this success that encouraged Carlyle to write in the same style his *French Revolution*, which has been received with like favour. In these times there have appeared in Europe few works so worthy of attention; few so notable at once for their repulsive and attractive qualities. If your glance stops at the surface, and external singularities repel you, do not read this strange book. The mystic and obscure form chosen by Carlyle will soon fatigue you, and you will chafe at so many disguises which are not even transparent. If you are charmed by purity of diction, if you are accustomed to the Anglo-Gallic style of Addison, to the brief, incisive, altogether British

sentences of Bacon, to the energetic and robust periods of Southey, Carlyle will displease you. . . . If you are an historian of fact, and pride yourself above all on a practical study of events and circumstances, you will be still more annoyed; for facts are badly told by him, sometimes magnified as to their importance, sometimes heaped together or scattered apart, always without that clear arrangement which constitutes history. But if you are a philosopher, that is to say a sincere observer of mankind, you will re-read his work more than once. It will specially charm you, if you dare lift yourself above parties, and the prejudices of the day. It is neither a well-written book, nor an exact history of the French Revolution. It is not an eloquent dissertation,—still less a transmutation of events and men into romantic narrative. It is a philosophic study, mingled with irony and drama, nothing more;"—in which description of the book there is a good deal of truth mingled with some misapprehension. Our critic goes on, touching now on the question of the form of the book:—"In writing it, the author concerned himself much more with the thought than the expression; he has thought more of the work than he has elaborated it. He has almost always seen clearly; he has often spoken

badly. His narrative has all the glow of a present and actual scene. These *seers*, who penetrate into the recesses of history, into the secret of its depths and its reality, who understand the uselessness of surface views and the inutility of unexplained facts, are rare. Can they at the same time *see* and *say*? then they are sublime; as Thucydides, for example, and Tacitus. To have half this marvellous gift is to be half a great man. Carlyle has only this half; and just that which appeals least to French intelligence, sagacity and depth. Our gift and our national want is clearness. Carlyle's theory, still obscure and ambiguous, does not reveal itself before his eyes in a certain manner, powerful and sympathetic. He does not know all that he aims at, he does not understand all that he says, he does not discern all that he sees. . . . He has found himself profoundly isolated in England. This misfortune for his life is auspicious for his glory. He has sacrificed nothing to party. He has been the man of his own thought, and the expression of his own character."

In the following passages we have a good description of Carlyle's method in *The French Revolution*, and an explanation, interesting as coming from a highly-cultured Frenchman, and

bearing out the views advanced at the commencement of this chapter, of the reasons why that great work has never been, and can never be popular in France:—"Carlyle recounts how this work of destruction was brought about, how the vast fabric of the French monarchy fell headlong, preceding the ruin of European monarchy. That there should have been, at that moment, protectors of the ancient structure, and ardent overthrowers of those crumbling stones, does not astonish him. That both should have been always violent, rarely sublime, often ridiculous, does not astonish him either, and he accuses nobody. When the actors are puerile and the personages paltry, he laughingly compares their littleness with the enormous dimensions of the catastrophe, and it is then that he frequently falls into burlesque. This side of his talent is not less hostile than all the others to our habits and our Gallo-Roman ideas, at all times rather solemn and disciplinarian. There is certainly nothing that pleases us less than the burlesque tone applied as a covering and veil to an energetic thought or a powerful picture. Those of our compatriots who have contrived to read some chapters of Carlyle on the strength of our recommendation verily believed that we were poking fun at them, when they

puzzled out the following titles :—'Astræa Redux,' 'Petition in Hieroglyphs,' &c. Let us, however, consider the matter. The grandeur of characters does not depend at all upon the grandeur of events. It is equally true that the serious and grave facts of this world are always combined with an alloy of puerility and *bizarrerie* which is not the least of the teaching of history. To reproduce at haphazard these miserable details without forgetting one of them would be an absurd and abject task; to select them and characterise them, so that all humanity, analysed in its last recesses and its last elements, shows itself and offers itself naked to the eye of the investigator, that is a serious, immense, and profound work. . . . Carlyle has not forgotten one of these traits. His skill consists in choosing them, in detaching them, and lighting them up. The force of his intelligence prevents him confounding paltry facts with characteristic circumstances, the inevitable pettinesses of human life with the special basenesses of the individual. His Mirabeau, his Bonaparte, his Charlotte Corday, subjected to this strange method and painted by the magnifying-glass, appear only the greater. This would be a masterpiece if Carlyle had realised, by grand perfection of form, the

depth and variety of meaning that his book contains. Error or misfortune which appertains to the North, to the English less than to the Germans, but to all nations stamped with Teutonism, to all Teutonic tongues! *Esse quam videri;* that is the watchword of these peoples. *Videri quam esse,* that is the device of all southern peoples who have inherited the Roman legacy; they carry with them contrary dangers. Our literature abounds in talents complete and hollow, in books well divided and ineffectual, in outward forms which have passed for regular, in appearances of things complete which are complete only in appearance. Great philosophic value does not prevent Carlyle's work, then, from being incomplete and obscure. But what talent, what wisdom, in this obscure book! This admirable Shakespearian sympathy, which sees all from above, which is indulgent towards all, ironic towards all, which has tears for the millions of human troubles, and smiles for the world's innumerable follies, is found philosophically refined and carried to its highest expression in the intelligence of Carlyle. He is impartial through irony and pity. That again is a sentiment which has little that is French about it. We are too ardent, too lively, too combative to resolve ourselves into an impartiality so cold

and so lofty. As to Carlyle his ultra-Saxon work will scarcely suit us; it is Teutonic by its long and intuitive glance; it is Anglo-Norman in its knowledge of men and affairs. It has nothing Roman, nothing Gallic, nothing disciplinarian, nothing of form; German and English, it sins by its bad form; it excels by sincerity and depth." All this is discriminating criticism, and if it appeals less directly to English than to French readers it has at least considerable interest for us. Very significant are the limitations that race and national temperament impose even upon the greatest geniuses. It is doubtful whether Shakespeare himself can ever be fully appreciated in France. We may conclude this notice of M. Chasles' essay by quoting his remarks on Carlyle's account of the opening of the States-General. After translating the passage from *The French Revolution*, he says:—

"That is assuredly not good historic style. In the original the confusion of diction, the excess of neologism, the strange audacity of the coined words, render this manner of writing still more burlesque. But it is impossible to assign better and more clearly to each personage his picturesque place in the history. Carlyle, seizing with infinite dexterity the character of each historic person, playing with him as a tiger or a

cat plays with an animal of inferior species, analysing him without pity, turning him from right to left, treating him, however, with a kind indulgence which is mingled with spite, with penetration and with charity, thus passes in review Calonne, Mirabeau, Marat, Necker, whoever shone obscurely or miraculously in the French Revolution. This method of impartiality, not mocking, not harsh, not laudatory, taking the man for what he is, never believing him to be completely sublime, or completely hateful, never seeing in him a thing of one piece, gives proof of an extreme sagacity; it is the method of Tacitus, of La Bruyère, of Shakespeare, of Saint-Simon. With Carlyle his smile and his pity, mingled with a philosophic *parti-pris*, make this disposition more remarkable. We find in him the observation of Shakespeare, less calm, more metaphysical, mingled unhappily with some affectation, but singularly powerful."

Émile Montégut on Carlyle.

We pass now to a second and more elaborate criticism of Carlyle—of his life and writings, and not of any particular book,—by M. Émile Montégut. It appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for 15th April 1849.* M. Montégut has been long

* *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Sixth Series. Vol. ii., pp. 278–314.

known as an assiduous student of English literature. He has translated into French Macaulay's *History of England*, and the complete works of Shakespeare; has published tales imitated from those of Hawthorne with a prefatory study of the American writer, and has written besides *L'Angleterre et ses Colonies Australes* in 1880, and *Essais sur l'Époque Actuelle* in 1858. His estimate of Carlyle is higher than that of M. Chasles, while it is certainly truer. It shows, too, a greater power of laying aside national prejudices, and of adopting the attitude primarily requisite for satisfactory criticism, that of sympathy towards the man criticised. He shows how far he is prepared to go with Carlyle in the opening sentences of his essay:—"Since the name of Thomas Carlyle was pronounced for the first time in France, since the literary value of his writings has found even here a brilliant appreciator" (referring to the paper by Philarète Chasles, already commented on), "strange events have happened to confirm the theories of the English humourist. Most of the things that he predicted have happened, and his explanation of the French Revolution is the only one we can now adopt, for it is the only one in which events have not falsified his horoscopes. Since we have so many social prophets and astrologers

predicting things which are always delayed, and are never realised, we ought to think ourselves happy to have, so to speak, an astronomer who knows how to fix precisely the day and the hour of eclipses, earthquakes, and storms." Few English critics would allow that Carlyle had so much of the prophet in him as this. The following estimate of some of his books shows an accurate knowledge of their contents and their relation to current phases of English thought:—"I prefer his history of the French Revolution to all those we have ourselves produced; I find it quite as dramatic, and I will venture to say more profound. I prefer his little book called *Chartism* to all the descriptions of social maladies and all the statistics that have been bestowed upon us in these latter times. *Sartor Resartus* appears to me to be at the same time the most profound and the most brilliant glance that has been thrown upon our century, upon its tendencies and its desires. In England he has put an end to many things; to the Satanic school, to the Utilitarian school, to English sensualism, and Scotch semi-sensualism. Carlyle has tried to renew the sources of thought, he has sought to bring back idealism among a people essentially practical, thinking little, calculating much; he has left on one side, to better attain his end, abstraction, logic, all

philosophic methods and instruments; he has, so to speak, rendered the ideal practical, in order to make it more easy of sight and touch to his fellow-citizens."

True and false mysticism.

The following defence of the mysticism of Carlyle, with its distinction between true and false mysticism—between the mysticism, for example, of Jacob Boehme or William Law, and that of Emanuel Swedenborg—is an excellent piece of writing. Its interest is enhanced from the fact that it proceeds from the pen of a Frenchman; for, despite certain exceptional examples which might be adduced, the French are, of all modern nations, the least likely to sympathise with the mystic attitude of mind:—"It is probable that for a long time yet we shall hear of the abysses of mysticism, of the follies of mysticism; but certainly if there is a mysticism which is absurd, there is another which is not at all so. True, mysticism is folly when it does not bear the stamp of reality, of human life, and when it wanders in a hazy world of dreams, in the midst of chimerical shows. True, mysticism is an abyss when it seeks in a fantastic world that which is near us and in our universe. Only this, it might be urged, is no longer mysticism, it is simply hallucination.

Nevertheless, if one finds a philosopher who, transfiguring the things of this world, reveals them to us shining with a divine clearness; if, in political, religious, and social affairs he is not content to live from day to day, and to let himself be carried, a clever swimmer, by the current of events, by the flux and reflux of opinions; if he has placed his ideal above the passing time; if, in art, he knows how to raise himself to the contemplation of the beautiful; if, in his writings and in his books, seeing something else than success, he condemns himself to appear strange; if the originality of his mind can discover new roads and cause unknown and hidden springs to well up; if his existence is full of raptures; if, in a word, he loves and admires natural objects because he regards them as the reflection of higher and mysterious causes, this philosopher may call himself a mystic, and is neither mad nor absurd, but on the contrary wise and profound. That is true mysticism, and whatever be the strangeness of what he recounts or what he affirms, he has a right to the sympathy, the admiration, and the recognition of mankind. . . . Two things go to make up a mystic: instinct and the faculty of observation. Almost all mystics are intuitive, and leap at one bound

towards things which are called ideal; but instinct, unreflecting and gushing, spreads itself like burning lava or a subterranean spring. It is a concentrated fire which must explode, water which long swelling must burst forth and inundate; it is in truth like an internal revolt. Instinct then is entirely blind, capable of being mistaken, of taking the absurd for the true, and that which is occult for that which is evident and certain. Happily with almost all philosophers worthy of the name of mystic the faculty of observation comes to the aid of the instinct. Almost all are great observers, full of perspicacity and delicacy. There are no moralists, psychologists, or romancers who know how to unravel human passions better than the mystics, even if they have had little contact with men; none who know better how to show the real significance of the things of this world." Thus far for mysticism in general; now for the application of these doctrines to the writings of Carlyle:—"The mysticism of Carlyle is entirely based on the primary realities; conscience, life, force. We will not attempt to analyse or dissect it. How analyse, for example, the deep sentiment of life which his writings disclose? It is better rather to feel the healthy influences of it, and to breathe its wholesome atmosphere.

Could one not say as much, besides, of every mystical book? For with purely ideal things Thomas Carlyle narrates, sees, describes, but does not explain and define exactly. His mind is a kind of northern light, or swift and shining meteor, suddenly illuminating things and plunging them as soon into darkness, or lighting them tranquilly and obscurely as in a luminous twilight. . . . We can put in two words our philosophic method, that which we would desire to employ with Carlyle. We never attempt to combat a philosophic book, but to understand it. The author may be at will mystic, sceptic, rationalist, pantheist, it matters little to us. Those are only words, titles, labels; they are not things. Those are general terms which mislead, for the scepticism of Montaigne is not that of Voltaire, nor yet is it that of Hume. It is very convenient to divide all philosophic writings into four or five classes, to arrange them under four or five chief heads (idealism, scepticism, or mysticism), and then to ask to what school such and such a man belongs, to what system such and such a book allies itself. This natural history or arithmetic of thought, as one might call it, has always greatly repelled us. Thought is something moral, which cannot confine itself in a general formula; it is always fresh and

original, even when it presents itself clothed in an old form." With these general considerations M. Montégut proceeds to a minute analysis of the mind and work of Carlyle. Into this we will not follow him at any great length; we will merely select here and there a few of the more salient passages. The following, for instance, illustrates the difficulty felt even by such an assimilative student as M. Montégut in accepting without protest the extremely individual style in which Carlyle conveyed his thoughts. In these remarks he echoes pretty closely the complaints of M. Chasles:—"Few men have clearer thoughts and more embarrassed expression. With him the thought is strong and the execution peccant. It is not that his style is without originality; it is, on the contrary, strikingly novel; he has above all that which artists call *le rendu*; he abounds also in expressions and compounds of his own coinage; but his writings lack composition and *ensemble*. All his pictures, all his thoughts, all his narratives lack connexion. He has the instincts of an artist, but no art; all his thoughts issue forth from his mind as if impelled by an internal fire. There result from this eruption all sorts of admirable metals in fusion, but which cannot form a work of art; of very solid fragments,

full of beauty, but nothing complete." "I should be disposed to call Thomas Carlyle the true thinker of the nineteenth century; he only troubles himself with our own times, he does not go further back than '89 in his historic researches, and his philosophic point of departure is Kant." Then follows this summary of the work of Carlyle:—"What was there to do? To bring back the religious sentiment, to preach reverence for what is better than ourselves, to recal to men that there is an ideal, and to make them remember, in a time when there is so much talk of the rights of man, that there exists a doctrine of duty; to show them the religion which has been called the 'worship of sorrow' in a time when they are clamouring for the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number;' to make them feel the necessity and the obligation of labour, when everyone is seeking the way to free himself from it and to shirk the common burden; to destroy the evil remnants of that Satanic school in which each adept finds no better means of employing his time than to denounce to the universe its miseries and its vices, the remnants of that scepticism which makes of this world a world of phantoms and masks 'whispering in each other's ears'; to recall to the men

of his time that everywhere and always man is always man, neither a beast nor a god; to restore to them at the same time the ideal which they have forgotten and the reality which they despise, and above all, to teach them that they are in an epoch of transition, and to advise them not to slumber on the pillow of confidence; that is what there was to do, and that is what Carlyle has done." With one more extract we will close our selections from this eloquent and thoughtful essay:—"We know now the principal ideas of Carlyle: our conclusion will be brief. The books, the doctrines, the tendencies of this hardy thinker, his indifference with regard to the doctrines of our time, seem to us full of a singular significance, and full of happy presages for us. After having read Carlyle, one remains convinced that if we are in a time of transition, the first period of that long transition may be regarded as accomplished. The ancient doctrines are crumbling into powder, the old parties are disappearing, and the germs of new doctrines may already be seen to appear; the elements of new parties already exist. We hail these signs with transport, and we hope that a mind will at last be found, a vigorous hand, to gather together these elements, to ripen these scattered germs, and to oppose them as the

surest of refutations, to the worn-out commonplaces, to the wearisome jests, to the tattered principles which have for too long formed our political and philosophic baggage."

In 1850 M. J. Milsand published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* a criticism of Carlyle's *Latter-Day Pamphlets*.* There is in it comparatively little elucidation; it is hardly more than a simple account of Carlyle's leading ideas, interspersed with the commonplace objections to them with which all readers of English reviews and newspapers are familiar. We quote from it only one passage:—"While all Europe admired only independence, Carlyle has passed his life in glorifying obedience and faith; he has understood and he has declared that docility was, under another name, the faculty of learning and of profiting by the science of others. All his works are, in a word, a homage rendered to the invisible protection that the intelligence of the wise extends to the masses, and a plea and a prayer that their kingdom may come. In his eyes the lights diffused among communities can profit them only on one condition; each one must do his business, each must exercise the

* *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Sixth series, vol. vi. pp. 1063-1111. No. for 15 June 1850.

aptitudes he possesses, and instead of deciding on everything, learn to leave things to the judgment of those who know more than himself."

Of all French criticisms on Carlyle, however, that of M. Henri Taine is, of course, the most remarkable.* It is as elaborate as any of his utterances on other great English writers, and has all the good and all the bad points of those highly original writings. It has all the excellencies on which we may safely count in a writer of such wide culture as M. Taine; its faults are only those unavoidable in a French critic treating of such a very personification of ultra-Teutonism as Carlyle. We might offer to M. Taine, in the case of Carlyle, the same advice which the late John Forster offered him in the case of Charles Dickens:—"See, before you oversee." M. Taine's brilliant preface to his study of Carlyle shows the spirit in which he approaches the writings of the English philosopher:—"When you ask Englishmen, especially those under forty, who amongst them are the thinking men, they first mention Carlyle; but at the same time they advise you not to read him, warning you that you will not understand

* *L'Idéalisme Anglais. Étude sur Carlyle, par H. Taine.* Paris, 1864, pp. 187 (afterwards incorporated in his *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*).

him at all. Then, of course, we hasten to get the twenty volumes of Carlyle — criticism, history, pamphlets, fantasies, philosophy; we read them with very strange emotions, contradicting every morning our opinion of the night before. We discover at last that we are in the presence of an extraordinary animal, a relic of a lost family, a sort of mastodon, lost in a world not made for him. We rejoice in this zoological good-luck, and dissect him with minute curiosity, reflecting that we shall probably never find another animal like him." * In this dissection we cannot follow M. Taine at any very great length. His paper is divided into the following heads:—Style and Mind; Vocation; Philosophy, Morality, and Criticism; Conception of History. Each section is again sub-divided into numerous headings. In our selections we shall choose those passages which at the same time throw most light on Carlyle, and are most characteristic of the style and mind of his critic. On the question of Carlyle's humour and the difficulty it presents to the French mind, M. Taine says:— "This kind of mind produces humour, a word

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* *History of English Literature. By H. A. Taine, D.C.L. Translated by H. Van Laun.* For permission to make use of this translation we are indebted to the courtesy of its present publishers and proprietors, Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

untranslateable in French, because in France they have not the thing. Humour is a species of talent which amuses Germans, Northmen; it suits their mind, as beer suits their palate. For men of another race it is disagreeable; they often find it too harsh and bitter. Amongst other things, this talent embraces a taste for contrasts. . . . These men love travesties, put a solemn garb over comic ideas, a clown's jacket over grave ones. Another feature of humour is that the author forgets the public for whom he writes. He declares that he does not care for it, that he needs neither to be understood nor approved, that he thinks and amuses himself by himself, and that if his taste and ideas displease it, it has only to disappear. He wishes to be refined and original at his ease; he is at home in his book, and with closed doors, he gets into his slippers, dressing-gown, often with his feet in the air, sometimes without a shirt. Carlyle has a style of his own, and marks his idea in his own fashion; it is our business to understand it. He alludes to a saying of Goethe, of Shakespeare, an anecdote which strikes him at the moment; so much the worse for us if we do not know it. He shouts when his fancy takes him; the worse for us if our ears do not like it. He writes on the caprice of his imagination, with all the starts of

invention; the worse for us if our mind goes at a different pace. He catches on the wing all the shades, all the oddities of his conception; the worse for us if ours cannot reach them. A last feature of humour is the irruption of violent jovialty, buried under a heap of sadness. Absurd indecency appears unannounced. Physical nature, hidden and oppressed under habits of melancholic reflection, is laid bare for an instant. You see a grimace, a clown's gesture, then everything resumes its wonted gravity. Add lastly the unforeseen flashes of imagination. The humourist covers a poet; suddenly, in the monotonous mist of prose, at the end of an argument, a vista shines; beautiful or ugly, it matters not; it is enough that it strikes our eyes. These inequalities fairly paint the solitary, energetic, imaginative German, a lover of violent contrasts, confirmed in personal and gloomy reflection, with sudden upwellings of physical instinct, so different from the Latin and classical races, races of orators or artists, where they never write but with an eye to the public, where they relish only consequent ideas, are only happy in the spectacle of harmonious forms, where the fancy is regulated, and voluptuousness appears natural." Hitting off thus with facile pen the peculiar method of the English writer, M. Taine arrives

at his first conclusion, he discovers the dominant note of Carlyle's mind. This, according to M. Taine, is struck in the celebrated "Pig Philosophy" of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*. "Such," he says, after quoting the "Pig Propositions," "is the mire in which he plunges modern life, and, beyond all others, English life; drowning with the same stroke, and in the same filth, the positive mind, the love of comfort, industrial science, Church, State, philosophy and law. This cynical catechism, thrown in amidst furious declamations, gives, I think, the dominant note of this strange mind: it is this mad tension which constitutes his talent; which produces and explains his images and incongruities, his laughter and his rages. There is an English expression which cannot be translated into French, but which depicts this condition, and illustrates the whole physical constitution of the race: *His blood is up*. In fact, the cold and phlegmatic temperament covers the surface; but when the roused blood has swept through the veins, the fevered animal can only be glutted by devastation, and only be satiated by excess." How then, it is naturally asked, can such a soul "so violent, so enthusiastic, so savage, so abandoned to imaginative follies, so void of taste, order and measure,"—

how can such a soul have accomplished steady work in this practical world, how can it have worked out its own salvation, and served as guide and beacon to many another mind? The anomaly was explained by M. Montégut when he said that Carlyle was controlled by his instinct and his faculty of observation. M. Taine puts it differently. He says Carlyle is restrained and directed by "two entirely English barriers"—"the sentiment of actuality, which is the positive spirit, and of the sublime, which makes the religious spirit; the first has turned him to real things, the other has furnished him with the interpretation of real things: instead of being sickly and visionary, he has become a philosopher and a historian."

We must turn to his histories to see these two phases of his mind in active play. "We must read his history of Cromwell to understand how far this sentiment of actuality penetrates him; with what knowledge it endows him; how he rectifies dates and texts; how he verifies traditions and genealogies; how he visits places, examines the trees, looks at the brooks, knows the agriculture, prices, the whole domestic and rural economy, all the political and literary circumstances; with what minuteness, precision and vehemence he reconstructs before his eyes

and before our own the external picture of objects and affairs, the internal picture of ideas and emotions. And it is not simply on his part conscience, habit, or prudence, but need and passion. In this great obscure void of the past, his eyes fix on the rare luminous points as on a treasure. The black sea of oblivion has swallowed up the rest: the million thoughts and actions of so many million beings have disappeared, and no power will make them rise again to the light. These few points subsist alone, like the tops of the highest rocks of a submerged continent. With what ardour, what deep feeling for the destroyed worlds, of which these rocks are the remains, does the historian lay upon them his eager hands, to discover from their nature and structure some revelation of the great drowned regions, which no eye shall ever see again!" This is the practical side of his genius, the sentiment of actuality, the positive spirit. But "he goes beyond, or rather is carried beyond this. The facts seized upon by this vehement imagination, are melted in it as a fire. Beneath this fury of conception, all vacillates. Ideas, changed into hallucinations, lose their solidity, beings are like dreams; the world, appearing in a nightmare, seems no more than a nightmare; the attestation of the bodily

senses loses its weight before inner visions as lucid as itself. . . . . This real world, these events so harshly followed up, circumscribed and handled, are to him only apparitions; the universe is divine. . . . . In fact, this is the ordinary position of Carlyle. It ends in wonder. Beyond and beneath objects, he perceives as it were an abyss, and is interrupted by shudderings. A score of times, a hundred times, in the *History of the French Revolution*, we have him suspending his account and dreaming. The immensity of the black night in which the human apparitions rise for an instant, the fatality of the crime which, once committed, remains attached to the chain of events as by a link of iron, the mysterious conduct which impels these floating masses to an unknown but inevitable end, are the great and sinister images which haunt him. He dreams anxiously of this focus of existence, of which we are only the reflection. He walks fearfully amongst this people of shadows, and tells himself, that he too is a shadow. He is troubled by the thought that these human phantoms have their substance elsewhere, and will answer to eternity for their short passage. He cries and trembles at the idea of this motionless world, of which ours is but a mutable figure. He divines in it some-

thing august and terrible. For he shapes it, and he shapes our world according to his own mind; he defines it by the emotions which he draws from it, and figures it by the impressions he receives from it." This is the other side of his genius, the sentiment of the sublime, which makes the religious spirit. The man who is penetrated by conceptions such as these "passes his life, like a Puritan, in veneration and fear. Carlyle passes his in expressing and impressing veneration and fear, and all his books are preachings."

Into the sections of M. Taine's Essay, which are entitled "Vocation" and "Philosophy, Morality, and Criticism," we do not propose to follow him. Both are admirable and thoughtful pieces of writing; but the first deals with the general principles of which Carlyle was the exponent, rather than with Carlyle himself, and the second consists of minute criticisms of his particular doctrines—criticism too minute to be reproduced here without interfering with the order of the ideas, and therefore with their intelligibility. We may close our review of M. Taine's paper with two extracts which clearly show his own relation to Carlyle. He has been describing the two classes of minds which commonly go by the names logical and intuitional,

and thus completes his description and illustrates it:—"The first proceed gradually from one idea to the next: they are methodical and cautious; they speak for the world at large, and prove what they say; they divide the field which they would traverse into sections to begin with, in order to exhaust their subject; they march by straight and level roads, so as to be sure against a fall; they proceed by transitions, enumerations, summaries; they advance from general to still more general conclusions; they form the exact and complete classification of a group. When they go beyond simple analysis, their whole talent consists in eloquently pleading a thesis. Amongst the contemporaries of Carlyle, Macaulay is the most complete model of this species of mind. The others, after having violently and confusedly rummaged among the details of a group, plunge with a sudden spring into the mother-motion. They see it then in its entirety; they perceive the powers which organise it; they reproduce it by divination; they depict it in miniature by the most expressive words, the strangest ideas; they are not capable of decomposing it into regular series, they always perceive in a lump. They think only by sudden concentrations of vehement ideas. They have a vision of distant effects or living actions; they are

revealers or poets. Michelet, amongst the French, is the best example of this form of intellect, and Carlyle is an English Michelet." With which mind, then, has the French critic the more sympathy? Or does he recognise the excellencies of both? No; he gives his judgment unreservedly for Macaulay:—"There is perhaps less genius in Macaulay than in Carlyle; but when we have fed for some time on this exaggerated and demonic style, this marvellous and sickly philosophy, this contorted and prophetic history, these sinister and furious politics, we gladly return to the continuous eloquence, to the vigorous reasoning, to the moderate prognostications, to the demonstrated theories, of the generous and solid mind which Europe has just lost, who brought honour to England, and whose place none can fill." That is to say, M. Taine gives exactly that judgment which we should have expected from a man of his race and training. His criticism is a model of style, and it shows a most careful study of the subject. No student of Carlyle can afford to leave it unread, for it is a masterly study of a master mind. But under all its cleverness there is the scarcely concealed sneer of the French wit, and in its insight there is no sympathy.

The last of the French critics whom we shall

here notice is M. G. Valbert, who, since Carlyle's death, has published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* an essay on his genius and work.* M. Valbert cannot concede that Carlyle was either a great writer, a great thinker, or a great historian. He is by no means, however, an unsympathetic critic, as will be seen by these extracts:—"From 1835 to 1860 there was not in England any more remarkable man of letters than Thomas Carlyle; none who had more influence or more power over men's minds. He was at once a writer, a historian and a thinker; the writer was admired and formed a school, the historian was read with avidity, a circle was formed round the thinker, and his disciples took his sentences for oracles. However, if it is true that the characteristic of a great writer is to have as many different styles as he had subjects to treat, Carlyle was not a great writer. He has always had only one style, well suited, truly, to himself, that of Carlyle. Into every subject he carried the oratorical style, tone, accent, and even the gesticulation, for he gesticulates much. He was prodigal of exclamation, he carried to excess apostrophe and prosopopœia. When one has read much of him, it is a blessing to read again three or four

* *Revue des Deux Mondes.* 1st March 1881, pp. 209-220.

pages of Voltaire, without even troubling to select them; oracles are often admirable, but they disturb too much; one tires soon of dealings with them and their eloquent gesticulation.

"Neither was Carlyle a great historian. One can never study his commentary on Cromwell's speeches, his *French Revolution*, and his *Frederick II.* without gaining much benefit; but what makes the historian is the power of understanding everything, and the absence of *parti-pris*, and Carlyle was less solicitous to understand than to praise that which he loved, and to paint in black that which he did not like. He has not told us about Cromwell, he has celebrated him; he has not explained the French Revolution, he has chanted it on his lyre, to which, for the occasion, he added a brazen string which made the sounds truly diabolic. When one is intoxicated with this music, by turns celestial or devilish, which afflicts the head and attacks the nerves, one finds a singular pleasure in reading again some chapters of Thucydides; it is a salutary douche which calms the senses and sets the spirit back in its seat. Finally, whatever were the vigour and the generosity of his thought, Carlyle was not a great thinker. He has proclaimed useful truths and he has often, also, spoken nonsense; but in his reasonings as in his unreason, he had no

method, and it is method which makes the philosopher. He was among the English the first to discover Germany, and this discovery caused him violent transports of enthusiasm, plunged him into long raptures. It appeared to him that, in a country which has produced Schiller and Goethe, Fichte and Hegel, profound and sublime thoughts were current articles commodities common enough, that it was enough to stoop to pick them up. . . . . Carlyle carried to England some of those precious stones which he had gathered in his peregrinations in Germany; he set them, and enshrined them richly, and people admired them much. But if he had borrowed from the German philosophers some of their most seductive conceptions, some of their most subtle theories, he had not learned from them that art of which they were masters and which consists in deducing from a principle all its consequences, in deducing ideas one from the other with a mathematical rigour so as to form a system from them. He had to some extent a fragmentary and loose mind, his speculations were made up of pieces and morsels, and he was never more than a mediocre dialectician. Whoever, after having meditated on *Sartor Resartus*, or the Lectures on *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, will take the trouble to decipher a page of Spinoza or of

Kant, will at once feel how wide is the difference between a philosopher and a simple *dilettante* in philosophy.

"If Carlyle can be reckoned neither among the great prose writers, nor among the great historians, nor among the great thinkers, it must be admitted that he had in him the stuff of a great poet, and we must accuse nature which in dowering him with the most brilliant imagination, had denied him the gift of rhythm and cadenced speech. There are those who put into verse what is hardly worth saying in prose; Carlyle has passed his life in saying in prose that which he could have wished to sing in verse. He was born to write poems and odes, and his histories are epics, his philosophic dissertations are elegies or psalms. The abstractions concerning which he reasons are for him living and very real beings; they have a face, eyes, a mouth, they weep and they laugh; and he chats with them, questions them, apostrophises them, praises or reprimands them, curses or blesses them. These are his heroes and his mistresses, his Achilles and his Tancred, his Lesbia and his Clorinda, and to show them clearly how like he considers them to living persons of flesh and blood, he always takes pains to write their names with a capital.

"Though he did the work of an historian and a philosopher, Carlyle was essentially rather a poet and a mystic. For that reason his personality and his books were an event in England; for despite its grand talent for silence, England is of all nations of the world the least inclined to mysticism. It is the country which produces the greatest number of empirics and utilitarians, the country where most of the people one meets are inclined to consider the world as a machine. The Englishman makes so much of mechanism that he puts a little of it into his religion, and is fain to reduce it, too, to practice, routine, form and formulas. Carlyle was a rebel, and he played the part of emancipator. He braved prejudices, he combatted received ideas, he made a wide breach in the walls of ancient Sion. This daring spirit was not afraid to tell his countrymen that a fetish in which one believes with all one's heart is a less contemptible idol than a formula of which one believes only half. . . . . England was astonished to have produced a man who taught the young that forms are of little value, that formulas pass away, that there are truths hidden in all religions, that one must reverence Apollo and Odin as well as the God of Mahomet, that if Jeremiah and St. John were great

prophets, Æschylus and Shakespeare were also inspired, that if Christ opened the eyes of the blind and made the lame to walk, all great men have miraculously opened closed eyes and set in motion legs which could not walk, that all times and all countries have accomplished prodigies."

APPENDIX.

LOUIS-PHILIPPE. *

It is not a light joy, such as can express itself in vain talk, in bluster, mockery, and 'tremendous cheers'; it is a stern, almost sacred joy, that the late news from Paris excite in earnest men. For a long, melancholy series of years past, there has been no event at all to excite in earnest men much other than weariness and disgust. To France least of all had we been looking, of late, for tidings that could elevate or cheer us. Nor is the present terrible occurrence properly great or joyful, as we say; it is very sad rather; sad as death, and human misery and sin:—yet with a radiance in it like that of stars; sternly beautiful, symbolic of immortality and eternity!

Sophist Guizot, Sham-King Louis-Philippe, and the host of quacks, of obscene spectral nightmares under which France lay writhing, are fled. Burst are the stony jaws of that enchanted, accursed living-tomb; rent suddenly are the leaden wrappages and cerements: from amid the noisome clamm and darkness of the grave, bursts forth, thunder-clad, a soul that was not dead, that cannot die! Courage: the righteous gods do still rule this earth. A divine Nemesis, hidden from the base and foolish, known always

* From the *Examiner*, March 4, 1848.

to the wise and noble, tracks unerringly the footsteps of the evil-doer; who is Nature's own enemy, and the enemy of her eternal laws, whom she cannot pardon. Him no force of policy, or most dexterous contrivance and vulpine energy and faculty, will save: into his own pit he, at last, does assuredly fall—sometimes, as now, in the sight and to the wonder of all men.

Alas that any king, or man, should need to have this oldest truth, older than the world itself, made new to him again, and asserted to be no fable or hearsay, but a very truth and fact, in this frightful manner! To the French nation and their kings it has been very impressively taught, under many forms, by most expensive courses of experiment, for sixty years back; and they, it appears, and we, still require new lessons upon it.

Very sad on all sides! Here is a man of much talent, of manifold experience in all provinces of life, accepting the supreme post among his fellow-men, and deliberately, with stedfast persistence, for seventeen years, attempting his high task there, not in the name of God, as we may say, but of the Enemy of God! On the *vulpine* capabilities alone had Louis-Philippe any reliance;—not by appealing with courageous energy and patience, to whatever was good and genuine and worthy round him (which existed, too, though wide-scattered, and in modest seclusion rather than flagrant on the house-tops); not by heroic appeal to this, but by easy appeal to what was bad and false and sordid, and to that only, has he endeavoured to reign. What noble thing achieved by him, what noble man called forth into beneficent activity by him, can Louis-Philippe look back upon? None. His management has been a cunningly

devised system of iniquity in all its basest shapes. Bribery has flourished; scandalous corruption, till the air was thick with it, and the hearts of men sick. Paltry rhetoricians, parliamentary tongue-fencers; mean jobbers, intriguers; every serviceablest form of human greed and low-mindedness has this 'source of honour' patronized. For the poor French people, who by their blood and agony bore him to that high place, what did he accomplish? Penal repression into silence; that, and too literally nothing more. To arm the sordid cupidities of one class against the bitter unreasonable necessities of the other, and to leave it so,—he saw no other method. His position was indeed difficult: but he should have called for help from Above, not from Below!

Alas, in his wide roamings through the world,—and few have had a wider ramble than this man,—he had failed to discover the secret of the world, after all. If this universe be indeed a huge swindle? In that case, supreme swindler will mean sovereign ruler: in that case,—but not in the other! Poor Louis-Philippe; his Spanish marriages had just prospered with him, to the disgust of all honourable hearts; in his Spanish marriages he felt that he had at length achieved the topstone which consolidated all, and made the Louis-Philippe system (cemented by such bribery mortar, bound by such diplomatic tie-beams) a miracle of architecture, when the solid earth (impatient of such edifices) gave way, and the Eumenides rose, and all was blazing insurrection and delirium; and Louis-Philippe 'drove off in a brougham,' or *coucou* street-cab, 'through the Barrier of Passy,'—towards Night and an avenging doom. Egalité Fils, after a long painful life-voyage, has

ended no better than Egalité Père did. It is a tragedy equal to that of the sons of Atreus.

Louis-Philippe one could pity as well as blame, were not all one's pity concentrated upon the millions who have suffered by his sins. On the French people's side, too, is it not tragical? These wild men in blouses, with their faces and their hearts all blazing in celestial and infernal lightning, with their barricades up, and their fusils in their hands,—they are now the *grandsons* of the Bastillers of '89 and the Septemberers of '92; the fathers fought in 1830, they in 1848 are still fighting. To the third generation it has been bequeathed by the second and the first: by the third generation the immense problem, still to solve, is not deserted, is duly taken up. They also protest, with their hearts' blood, against a universe of lies; and say, audibly as with the voice of whirlwinds, "In the name of all the gods, we will not have it so! We will die rather; we and our sons and grandsons, as our fathers and grandfathers have done. Take thought of it, therefore, what our first transcendant *French Revolution* did mean; for your own sake and for ours, take thought, and discover it, and accomplish it, for accomplished it shall and must be, and peace or rest is not in the world till then!"

'The throne was carried out by armed men in blouses; was dragged along the streets, and at last smashed into small pieces,' say the journals. Into small pieces: let it be elaborately broken, pains be taken that of it their remain nothing: — "Begone, thou wretched upholstery phantasm; descend thou to the abysses, to the cesspools, spurned of all men; thou art not the thing we required to heal us of our unbearable miseries; not thou, it must be

something other than thou!" So ends the 'Throne of the Barricades;' and so it right well deserved to end. Thrones founded on iniquity, on hypocrisy, and the appeal to human baseness, cannot end otherwise.

When Napoleon, the armed Soldier of Democracy as he has been called,—who at one time had discerned well that lies were unbelievable, that nations and persons ought to strip themselves of lies, that it was better even to go bare than "*clothed* with curses" by way of garment;—when Napoleon, drunk with more victory than he could carry, was about deserting this true faith, and attaching himself to Popes and Kaisers, and other entities of the chimerical kind; and in particular had made an immense explosion of magnificence at Notre-Dame, to celebrate his *Concordat* ('the cow-pox of religion,' *la vaccine de la religion*, as he himself privately named it), he said to Augereau, the fencing-master who had become field-marshal, "Is it not magnificent?" "Yes, very much so," answered Augereau; "to complete it there wanted only some shadow of the half-million men who have been shot dead to put an end to all that."

"All fictions are *now* ended," says M. Lamartine at the Hotel de Ville. May the gods grant it. Something other and better, for the French and for us, might then try, were it but afar off, to begin!

REPEAL OF THE UNION.*

To hear the loud and ever louder voice of poor Ireland for many years back, it must be clear there is but one thing wanting to make that Island happy: total disseverance from this Island; perfect and complete Repeal of the Union, as it is called. If, some night, the Union could but be completely shorn asunder, repealed and annihilated for ever, the next morning Ireland, with no England henceforth to molest her, would awake and find herself happy. The Claddagh fishermen would straightway go out and catch herring, no gun-brig now needed to keep them from quarrelling, no Quaker deputation to furnish them with nets. Falsity of word, of thought, and of deed, that morning, would become veracity; futility success; loud mad bluster would become sane talk, transacted at a moderate pitch of voice, in small quantity and for practicable objects. Then should we see ragged sluggardism darn its rags, and everywhere hasten to become industrious energy, ardent patient manfulness, and successful skill: Conciliation and Confederation halls had suddenly become a double sanhedrim of heroic sages; Jarlath a mount of Gospel prophecy, John of Tuam an Irish Paraclete; and generally over the face of that Island, first flower of the earth and first gem of the sea, there would be visible the valiant diligence of human souls, ardent, patient, manfully strong; and there would rise towards Heaven that worship which is the welcomest and the eternally

* From the *Examiner*, April 29, 1848.

blessed, the sound of wisdom where there was speech, and manifoldly the inarticulate hum likewise of wisdom (which means patient cunning of hand and valiant strength of heart) where there was work. Then were the finest peasantry in the world, indeed a fine peasantry; and Ireland, first flower of the earth, a place that might at least cease to bother its neighbours, borrowing potatoes from them! A consummation devoutly to be wished.

In truth, Ireland awakening that morning, with England totally dissevered from her, would be a mighty pretty "nation," likely to take a high figure among the nations of the world. M. Ledru Rollin could not desire a better Republic than you had here, just getting under way: a Republic ready to fraternise with him to all lengths (so long as he did not starve it as the wicked Lord John Russell does), and sure to be a great favourite with her French sister. American Jonathan too, I fancy his love for that nation and that nation's love for him, on further practical acquaintance. "Considerable water privileges, I guess; good land lots; a d——d deal of white Chactaws, though:—a country we could improve, I guess!" Yes, Jonathan; I have no doubt you could. "We would improve you," says Jonathan to the Canadian *Habitans*. "oh, we would improve you off the face of the earth!"

All this looks very mad on the part of the Sister Island; and yet, alas, such is the state of Ireland and of Irish life, it has to be owned they are not the worst citizens who with mad sincerity proclaim "Repeal of the Union" just now, and purchase pikes and rifles to procure it with, at the expense of insurrection and at all other expenses, that of their own lives included. Nor the worst Irish citizens

they; no, a still worse sort are those, not hitherto attackable by any Attorney-General, who sit still in the middle of all that and say "Peace, peace" to it all, as if *it* were or could be peace. Ireland in the quiet chronic state, is still more hideous than Ireland in the critical, even insurrectionary state. No, that is not peace; that of a governing class glittering in foreign capitals, or at home sitting idly in its drawing-rooms, in its hunting-saddles, like a class quite unconcerned with governing, concerned only to get the rents and wages of governing, and the governable *un*-governed millions sunk meanwhile in dark cabins, in ignorance, sloth, confusion, superstition, and putrid ignominy, dying the hunger-death, or what is worse, living the hunger-life, in degradation below that of dogs. A human dog-kennel five millions strong, is that a thing to be quiet over? The maddest John of Tuam, uttering in his afflictive ghastly dialect (a dialect very *ghastly*, made up of extinct Romish cant, and inextinguishable Irish self-conceit, and rage, and ignorant unreason) his brimstone denunciations, is a mild phenomenon compared with some others that say nothing.

That Lord John Russell should feed the Irish people, that in every hungry Irish mouth Lord John Russell should have a spoon with cooked victuals ready, this is the enlarged Gospel according to him of Tuam. One of the maddest Gospels; yet not wholly without a tincture of meaning at the bottom of it. John of Tuam does at least say, there is no peace, there can be no peace till this alter;—John speaks true, so far, though in a rabid manner, and like an Irish Gospel Comforter. Not a hypocrite; or if so, one whose *hypocrisis* has grown with the very blood of him; who is a

sacrosanct theological play-actor to the very backbone; and prophesies, since he must prophesy, through the organs of a solemn mountebank and consecrated drug-vendor,—patented by the Holy Father himself to vend Romish quack drugs, doing a little, too, in Repeal nostrums, and now reduced by just rage, as we say, to *prophesy:* a situation enough of itself to drive one half rabid!

Meanwhile, it is evident, the sober part of the world begins to get somewhat weary of all that.

Several indolent members of Parliament, and many indolent members of society on this side of the water, are beginning to testify their willingness, for their part, to gratify the Irish populations by conceding the demand for Repeal. Since Ireland wants but this to her happiness, say they, why not allow her to be happy? Of happiness for England, or us, in this sublime union with the sister island, God knows there has been no overplus: our share in the said happiness would sell at a light figure in any market. To have our land overrun with hordes of hungry white savages, covered with dirt and rags, full of noise, falsity, and turbulence, deranging every relation between rich and poor, feeding the gibbets all along our western coasts, submerging our populations into the depths of dirt, savagery, and human degradation: here is no great share of blessedness that we should covet it, and go forth in arms to vindicate it. Nor are the gentry of Ireland, such as we find them, with formidable whiskers, and questionable outfit on the spiritual or economical side, drinking punch, fortune-hunting, or playing roulette at Brighton, Leamington, or other places of resort, such an entrancingly beautiful addition to our own washed classes that we would go to

war for retaining possession of them. If the gods took all these classes bodily home, and left us wholly bereaved of them for ever and a day, it is a fixed popular belief here, this poor Island could rub on very much as before. The rents of Ireland spent in England,—alas, not even the spending of the rents fascinates us. The rents, it is to be observed, are *spent*, not given away, not a sixpence of them given,—nay quite the contrary; part of the account, as many poor tradesmen's books, and in debtors' prisons several whiskered gentlemen, can testify, is often left unpaid:—rents all *spent*, we say; laid out in the purchase of things marketable, eatable, enjoyable; the vital fact clearly being, that so long as England *has* things for sale in the market, she will (through the kindness of the gods) find purchasers, Irish or Non-Irish, and even purchasers that will pay her the whole account without need of imprisonment, it is to be hoped!

Certainly, since the first invention of speech, there never was in the heart of any class of human beings a more egregious misunderstanding, than this of the felicity the English nation derives, has derived, or is likely for some time yet to derive, from union with the sister island. Not by drinking, cannibal-like, the blood and fat of Ireland, has England supported herself hitherto in this universe, but by quite other sustenances and exertions. England were a lean nation otherwise. Not with any ecstasy of hope or of remembrance does England contemplate this divine happiness of union with the sister island. England's happiness from that connexion would sell at a small figure. In fact, if poor Bull had not a skin thicker than the shield of Ajax, and a practical patience without example among

mankind, he would, reading the Gospel-messages of Jarlath, the debates of Confederation and Conciliation halls, and sorrowfully thinking of his many millions thrown into the black gulf of turbulent hunger, his ten last year, when he could ill spare it,—blaze up wholly into unquenchable indignation, of temperature not measurable by Fahrenheit, and lose command of himself for some time!

Natural enough that several careless members of Parliament, and many careless members of society, should express themselves prepared to concede the Repeal of the Union, and make Ireland happy. Nay, I venture to say, in spite of the present extenuated state of finance, and pressure of the income tax, and unspeakable pressures and extenuations of every kind,—could any projecting Warner of the long range be found who would undertake to *unanchor* the Island of Ireland, and sail fairly away with it, and with all its populations and possessions to the last torn hat that stops a window-pane, and anchor them safe again at a distance, say of 3,000 miles from us,—funds to any amount would be subscribed here for putting into immediate activity such Warner of the long range. Funds? Our railways have cost us 150 millions: but what were all railways, for convenience of England, in comparison to this unanchoring of Ireland from the side of her? If it depended on funds, such Warner of the long range might have funds in sufficiency. To make the National Debt an even milliard of pounds sterling, which gives 200 and odd millions to the Warner operation,—this, heavy as it is, I should think one of the best investments of capital; and do not doubt it would be cheerfully raised in this country for such an object.

The sadder is the reflection that such operation is impossible, for ever forbidden by the laws of gravitation and terrestrial cohesion; and, alas, that without such operation, Repeal of the Union is also impossible. Impossible this too, my poor English and Irish friends; forbidden, this too, by the laws of the universe just at present, and not to be thought of in these current centuries. I grieve to say it; but so the matter is; flatly forbidden by the laws of the universe in these current centuries, and not to be ventured upon as an investment by any person whose capital of money, logic, rhetoric, wind-eloquence, influence, courage, strength, old soda-water bottles, or other animal or spiritual possession is precious to him. In fact, if capital seek investment in such matters, let it rather invest itself in the Warner operation first. That is the preliminary operation, and will be the handsomer. There it will bring mere destruction of itself: arithmetical zero on the day of settlement, and not frightful minus quantities.

For, alas! poor English and Irish friends, do you not see these three things, more or less clear even in your own poor dim imaginations?

1. That Ireland is inhabited by seven or eight millions, who unfortunately speak a partially intelligible dialect of the English language, and having a white skin and European features, cannot be prevented from circulating among us at discretion, and to all manner of lengths and breadths.

2. That the Island of Ireland stretches for a length of some 300 miles parallel to that of Britain, with an Irish Channel everywhere bridged over by ships, steamers, herring-busses, boats and bomb-ketches, length of said bridge varying from six hours to one hour; so that, for

practical purposes, it lies as if in contact, divided only by a strait ditch, and till the Warner operation be completed, cannot by human art be fenced out from us, but is unfortunately *we* till then.

3. That the stern Destinies have laid upon England a terrible job of labour in these centuries, and will inexorably (as their wont is) have it done: a job of labour terrible to look upon, extending superficially to the Indies and the Antipodes over all countries, and in depth, one knows not how deep; for it is not cotton-spinning and commercing merely: it is (as begins to be visible) governing, regulating, which in these days will mean conquering dragons and world-wide chimeras, and climbing as high as the zenith to snatch fire from the gods, and diving as deep as the nadir to fling devils in chains:—and it has been laid upon the poor English people, all this; a heavier, terribler job of labour than any people has been saddled with in these generations! Conquering *Anarchy*; which is not conquerable *except* by weapons gained in Heaven's armoury, and used in battles against Orcus;—so that we may say of him that conquers it, as the Italians were wont to say of Dante: *Eccovi l'uom ch'é stato all' inferno!* Truer this than you suppose.

Under which circumstances, consider whether on any terms England can have her house cut in two, and a foreign nation, with contradictory tendencies and perpetual controversy, lodged in her back-parlour itself? Not in any measure conceivable by the liveliest imagination that will be candid! England's heavy job of work, inexorably needful to be done, cannot go on at all, unless her back-parlour too belong to herself; with foreign controversies,

parliamentary eloquences, with American sympathisers, Parisian *émeutiers*, Ledru-Rollins, and a world just now fallen into bottomless anarchy, parading incessantly through her back-parlour, no nation can go on with any work. I put it to Conciliation Hall itself, to any Irish Confederation that will be candid. The candid Irish Confederation admits that such is really the fact; that England's work will be effectually stopped by this occupation of her back-parlour; and furthermore that they, the Irish Confederation, mean it so—mean to stop England's work appointed her by the so-called Destinies and Divine Providences. They, the Irish Confederation, and finest peasantry in the world, armed with pikes, will stop all that; and prove that it is not Divine Providence at all, but Diabolical Accident, and a thing which they, the finest peasantry in the world, can stop. And so they will make the experiment, it seems; and certainly, if the finest peasantry can conquer and exterminate this poor nation of England, they will bar the way to her Progress through the Ages, relieve her of her terrible job of work, repeal the Union, and do several other surprising things. So stands the controversy at present.

If the darkness of human creatures, in a state of just or unjust frenzy, were not known to be miraculous, surely we might pause stupent over such a reading of the Heavenly omens on the part of any creature. The chance Ireland has, with her finest peasantry, to bar the way of England through the Ages, seems small in the extreme.

Lord Morpeth tries to demonstrate that Ireland herself will be ruined without the Union; that if it really would

make Ireland happy, he would concede the Repeal with pleasure; but that it will not, and therefore he cannot. I go farther than his lordship, and say that though it made Ireland never so happy, it could not be conceded even in that impossible contingency. Ireland and her happiness, it should with all clearness be made known to unreasonable noisy men, is a small matter compared with Britain's and Ireland's *nobleness*, or conformity to the eternal law—wherein alone can 'happiness' either for Britain or Ireland be found. Ireland very much misunderstands her own importance at present. Ireland looks at herself on the map in the population returns, and finding a big blot there, rashly supposes she is an immense element in the sum of British Power. Which is much the reverse of the fact. Deduct what we may call Teutonic Ireland, Ulster and the other analogous regions; leave only the Ireland that clamours for Repeal at present, and in spite of its size on the map and in the population returns, we must say that its value hitherto approaches amazingly to zero, so far as Britain is concerned. Not out of the Tipperary regions did the artillery that has subdued the world, and its anarchies and its devils and wild dog-kennels, proceed hitherto. No, it was out of other regions than Tipperary, by other equipments than are commonest in Tipperary, that England built up her social Constitutions, wrote her Literature, planted her Americas, subdued her Indias, spun her Cotton-webs, and got along with her enormous job of work so far. This is true, and Tipperary ought to know this, and even will be made to know it,—by terrible schooling, if mild will not serve.

For it behoves men to know what is fact in their posi-

tion; only by rigorously conforming to that can they have the Universe on their side, and achieve any prosperity whatever. With fact against you, with the whole Universe and the Eternal Laws against you, what prosperity can you achieve? Monster meetings, O'Connell eloquence, and Mullaghmast caps, cannot change the state of the fact, cannot alter the Laws of the Universe; not a whit; the Universe remains precisely what it was before the Mullaghmast cap took shape among the headgear of men.

Ireland counts some seven, or five, or three, millions of the finest repealing peasantry; but it ought to remember that the British Empire already enumerates as its subjects some hundred-and-fifty millions. To such extent have the gods appointed it to rule in this Planet at this date. There is no denying it. Over so many mortals does Great Britain at this epoch of time preside, and is bound by laws deeper than any written ones to see well how it will care for them. That is her task among the Nations; a heavy and tremendous, but a great and glorious one: to which not I and some public Journalists and Clerks in Downing Street, but the mute voice of the Eternal itself is calling her: to do that task is the supreme of all duties for her, and by the help of God and of all good citizens, to every one of whom it is of awful divine import withal, she will try to do it. If Tipperary choose to obstruct England in this terrible enterprise, Tipperary, I can see, will learn better, or meet a doom that makes me shudder. Conquer England; bar the way of England? About as rationally might a violent-tempered starved rat, extenuated into frenzy, attempt to bar the way of a rhinoceros. The frantic extenuated smaller animal cannot bar the way of the other: can but

bite the heels of the other, provoke the other, till it lift its broad hoof, squelch the frantic smaller animal, and pass inevitably on.

Let Irish Patriots seek some other remedy than repealing the Union; let all men cease to talk or speculate on that, since once for all it cannot be done. In no conceivable circumstances could or durst a British minister propose to concede such a thing: the British minister that proposed it would deserve to be impeached as a traitor to his high post, and to lose his worthless head. Nay, if, in the present cowardly humour of most ministers and governing persons, and loud insane babble of anarchic men, a traitorous minister did consent to help himself over the evil hour by yielding to it, and conceding its mad demand,—even he, whether he saved his traitorous head or lost it, would have done nothing towards the Repeal of the Union. A law higher than that of Parliament, as we have said, an Eternal Law proclaims the Union unrepealable in these centuries. England's work, whatever her ministers be, till all her citizens likewise cease, requires to be done. While a British citizen is left, there is left a protestor against our country being occupied by foreigners, a repealer of the Repeal. Not while British men walk erect in this Island can Ledru Rollins, American sympathisers, Parisian *organisateurs*, and an anarchic canaille, be left at rifle-practice and parliamentary eloquence in the other. Never, in my opinion; clearly never. And so, even were Repeal conceded, Repeal would at all moments, by night and by day, cry irrepressibly to be revoked; and one day would get itself revoked,—perhaps in a final way that time! The rhinoceros is long-suffering, thick of skin, entirely indisposed to severe

methods at present; but the frantic smaller animal should not drive him quite to extremities either, but bethink himself a little.

True, most true, the wretched Irish populations have enough to complain of, and the worst traitors against their country are they who lie quiet in such a putrid lazar-house; but it is not England alone, as they will find, that has done or does them mischief; not England alone or even chiefly, as they will find. Nor indeed are their woes peculiar, or even specifically different from our own. We too in this Island have our woes; governing classes that do not in the least govern, and working classes that cannot longer do without governing: woes, almost grown unbearable, and precisely in a less degree those of Ireland are in a greater. But we study to bear our woes till they can be got articulated in feasible proposals: we do not think, to rush out into the street and knock men down with our shillelagh will be the way of healing them. We have decided by an immense majority to endure our woes, and wait for feasible proposals; to reserve barricades, insurrections, revolutionary pikes to the very last extremity. Considerable constitutional and social improvements have been made in this Island; really very considerable; which all Europe is now rushing pell-mell, in a very ominous way, to imitate, as the one secret of national well-being. Considerable social improvements;—but what is remarkable, by pikes and insurrection not one of them hitherto. No, our Civil War itself proceeded according to Act of Parliament: let all things, even death and battle, be done decently, done in order! By feasible proposals, and determination silently made up, wrought out in long dark

silent struggles into *conformity* with the laws of fact, and unalterable as the same,—by those nobler methods, and not by insurrectionary pikes and street barricades, has England got along hitherto; and hopes that henceforth too they may suffice her. In which nobler methods we earnestly invite all Irish reformers to join us, promising them that no feasible proposal of theirs but shall be one of ours too, and that in fact our adventure and theirs, whether it have to persuade Repeal into silence or trample it into annihilation, is one and the same.

So that the case stands thus. Ireland, at this moment and for a good while back, has been admitted and is practically invited to become British; to right its wrongs along with ours, to fight its battles by our side, and take share in that huge destiny along with us, if it will and can. Will it; can it? One does not know. The Cherokees, Sioux, and Chactaws, had a like invitation given them, in the new Continents two centuries ago. "Can you, will you, O noble Chactaws, looking through superficial entanglements, estrangements, irritating temptations, into the heart of the matter, join with us in this heavy job of work we Yankee Englanders have got to do here? Will you learn to plough the ground, to do carpentry, and live peaceably, supporting yourselves in obedience to those above you? If so, you shall be of us, we say, and the gods say. If not—"!—Alas! the answer was in the negative; the Chactaws would not, could not; and accordingly the Chactaws, 'in spite of 200 acts of legislation in their favour at divers times,' are extinct; cut off by the inexorable gods. It is a lesson taught everywhere; everywhere, in these days of Aborigines Protection

Societies and Exeter-Hall babble, deserving to be well learned. Noisy, turbulent, irreclaimable savagery cannot be 'protected;' it is doomed to become reclaimable, or to disappear. The Celts of Connemara, and other repealing finest peasantry, are white and not black; but it is not the colour of the skin that determines the savagery of a man. He is a savage, who, in his sullen stupidity, in his chronic rage and misery, cannot know the facts of this world when he sees them; whom suffering does not teach but only madden; who blames all men and all things except the one only that can be blamed with advantage, namely *himself*; who believes, on the Hill of Tara or elsewhere, what is palpably untrue, being himself unluckily a liar, and the truth, or any sense of the truth, not in him; who curses, instead of thinks and considers;—brandishes his tomahawk against the laws of nature, and prevails therein as we may fancy, and can see! Fruitless futile insurrections, continual sanguinary broils and riots that make his dwelling-place a horror to mankind, mark his progress generation after generation; and if no beneficent hand will chain him into wholesome *slavery*, and, with whip on back or otherwise, try to tame him, and get some work out of him,—Nature herself, intent to have her world tilled, has no resource but to exterminate him, as she has done the wolves and various other obstinately *free* creatures before now! These are hard words, but they are true.

LEGISLATION FOR IRELAND.*

Lord John Russell has before Parliament, or in due time will have, two small Bills for improved Registration of Voters in Ireland; and a third for some slight loan, only another million or less, to Irish Landlords, if they will behave well: but what has become of the Sale of Encumbered Estates Bill for Ireland? Surely in the front rank, and as a preliminary to all other bills, the Minister was bound to have got that Bill passed. It is the preliminary and foundation-stone of all other Irish arrangements whatsoever.

By the Poor-law Bill, now passed into law, and struggling to get itself passed everywhere into practice as a fact, it has been, so to speak, solemnly declared, That there are to be no more starvations in Ireland; that 'the white European man, with his ten cunning fingers at his shacle-bones, and miraculous head on his shoulders,' is no more to perish for want of guidance towards work and sustenance of food; that such inhuman tragedy, the most scandalous the sun now sees, is not to be transacted any more in Ireland, or in any land of ours. That Irish wealth, which means Irish strength and wisdom and resource, shall not continue to play such tricks in the governance of Irish indigence and resourceless ignorance; but that it shall straightway cease from such, for neither God nor man can stand it any longer. That, in a word, the Irish aristocracy, if it will preserve its land much

* The *Examiner*, May 13, 1848.

longer, shall rapidly come home from foreign capitals, cease drinking punch and playing roulette at Bath or Leamington, dismount from its idle hunting-saddles, descend from its idle drawing-rooms into the neighbouring hunger-cabins; and see how on these terms it will manage Irish poverty, for on these terms only can or shall it be managed henceforth.

By this new Poor-law, speaking a small piece of everlasting justice in Chancery dialect for once, it has been declared, That the land of Ireland is the mother of all Irishmen; and that no Irishman, not doomed to it by some judge or law, shall die starved in future. That, accordingly, the aristocracy have now before them a really tremendous task of work; a task criminally left undone, unattempted, for so many generations, and which has now accumulated till its seeks its fellow in the world! That nevertheless it is their task, and with fearful limitations of *time* too;—and that they have not a minute to lose! That verily this is it: If the millions die, the units cannot and shall not be left living. That they are all in one boat now; that according to the steerage of the said boat, shall they all swim, or else all sink. It is the everlasting law of Heaven; and much do all good citizens rejoice that it has, at length, become the express law of Earth as well.

So that Irish landowners, who are the only considerable class of wealthy Irishmen, are now also brought to book, even as Irish lackalls are; and the inexorable Destinies inquire of them too, "Is there any wisdom in you, any heroism in you, that you can deal with this chaotic heap of vice and misery, of darknesses, injustices—

in one word, of long-continued falsities, acted, spoken, thought? If so, it shall be well; if not so it shall be ill and ever worse. Hands to the work; and now, then, or else literally never!"

Whether Irish landlords understand completely that this inexorable just law, long valid in Heaven, has gone forth against them on Earth too, I do not quite know; but guess rather that many of them still idly think, It cannot be possible but the old use-and-wont will still somehow contrive to continue. They will get out of it, or beneficent British legislation will get them out of it by some official sleight-of-hand; they will fall back on the English, make it an imperial calamity;—on the whole, can the laws of Nature suddenly change? Somehow or other, certainly to Heaven, the old use-and-wont will continue!—Such, I rather think, is their idle computation hitherto: but if so, I rejoice to discern that such computation is fallacious quite, in all parts of it; a broken reed, upon which if a man lean, it will run into his hand.

Even so: and all of us thank God for the merciful destruction of the potato (much as we love that tragic vegetable when well boiled); and, in pious silence, worshipping the decrees of Heaven, perceive that, with the potato rotten, Irish existence can no longer, by any human cunning, be maintained in the hideous quiet chronic state, but will either begin to base itself on God's justice, or continue insurrectionary till all end together. By no official sleight-of-hand can Irish landlordism continue idly glittering, and Irish pauperism idly dying, henceforth. No, we discern, with inexpressible thankfulness so far, that all must either die together, or else all live together;

nay now that, with the potato rotten, this critical crucial experiment (a true *experimentum crucis*) has actually begun, and cannot, by human cunning and all the red tape of the world, be prevented from going on ever more rapidly, and getting to its decision. Decision, "Yes, we have wisdom enough, and shall live;" or decision, "No, we have not wisdom enough, and must depart and give place to others that have:" one or the other is rapidly coming, and now inevitable.

But now surely, if in these circumstances there is any law indisputably needful, and pressingly called for as the preliminary of everything, it is this, That the Irish landlord should instantly be brought into free contact, and unlimited power of manipulation, and action and reaction, with his land; that he should enter on his stern crucial experiment, with at least the possibility of *trying* to get through it! At present, what with mortgages, debts, encumbrances, what with leases, sub-leases, leases for lives, leases for terms, and other inextricable leases, contracts, and covenants,—the Irish landlord stands indeed looking at all his land, but with his hands tied from touching great part of it. Landlords nominally of £10,000 a year rent, do not command more than one thousand; over the remaining £9,000 they have no more command than I: that is the situation of the Irish landlord. A crueller situation, with such a law of Heaven and of Earth now hanging over him, is hardly conceivable. Swifty, instantly, should Government emancipate any and every true Irish landlord, bent to try this terrible problem, from such an inconceivably absurd position. Swiftly, instantly, should this bill, all manner of needful bills to facilitate

the sale of encumbered estates,—to bring a man into contact with the chaotic problem he has got, or at once to absolve him from it,—be passed through Parliament.

Nay, if this bill and other bills would not do, a swift Special Commission of twelve just men,—a just lawyer one of them, just husbandmen, tenants, landlords, just men experienced in the business, the other eleven,—should be named swiftly, to serve as a summary conclusive General Jury for Ireland, in regard to this matter; and in the name of God, to settle it, as justly as they could, and above all things *soon*. The case warrants it, such a plan even as the latter; but I do not think the Minister will adopt that! No;—and in fact, the circumstance that no Irish landlord yet complains, aloud to the world, that while the new Poor-law is in action, and their crucial experiment begun, this other law, to untie their hands and let them have at least a possibility, remains unpassed, —is rather remarkable; and excites the sad surmise that our Irish landlord friends do not at heart believe in the critical nature of their position, but idly think official sleight-of-hand will still serve them, and old use-and-wont will somehow be got to go on as heretofore. In which delusive thought does the Minister perhaps encourage them, encourage himself? A flattering unction indeed, and very comfortable, laid softly on the soul; but what will the cost of it be, thinks this Minister? I can compare him only to the steersman encouraging his fellow-rowers to continue idle, and *not* bale the sinking boat! "The waves will not swallow her," he intimates; "sleight-of-hand, and the broad back of England, will still bear her up!"

What does the Minister mean by listening to money-lenders, mortgagees, steward attorneys, or any class of creatures, and not hastening through with this bill, these bills, that Special Commission itself, or whatever else *will* straightway bring the Irish landlord into practical contact with his land? Is it, as some surmise, that the Irish landlords themselves, menaced by attorney mortgagees, object, and threaten to go into opposition? "Oh, *don't* think of baling the boat, then; sit quiet; I wouldn't for the world distress you, friends; nay, you will overset us if you make a stir, and then—!" Madder neglect of legislation than the want of this measure to follow in the rear of the other, is not seen even in the British Parliament at present.

Alas, in disorganic Ireland itself there struggle (as everywhere in Creation and even in Chaos) organic filaments —which even in a British Parliament, a chief Governor *could* endeavour to spin together! Ireland itself is not without some similitude of the Two Aristocracies, hitherto the vital element in all human societies, and likely henceforth to be so when societies again become human: a Governing Class or rich aristocracy of Landlords, and a Teaching Class, or a poor aristocracy of Priests. Sore defaced from their just shape, both of those classes; yet capable, both, of being dealt with by the British Parliament,—to unspeakable profit, both, if well dealt with. His lordship, even in the depths of most complex officiality, is not quite without resources: no living man anywhere ever was. Resources far superior, it may be hoped, to this of passing registration bills for Ireland, and polishing the electoral suffrage into its last finish of perfection there! Or if he *is*,—the

world should, with all speed, be made aware of the alarming fact, and asked what steps it will take in consequence. Steps must be taken, and that soon. These weeks and months are precious, and perhaps priceless; rushing swiftly,—everyone asks, Whitherward? The rapids of Niagara, after a while, become too rapid; and *then* there is no oaring or steering!

IRELAND AND THE BRITISH CHIEF GOVERNOR.*

THE Easter recess having ended, and Parliament happily got together again, Lord John Russell comes forward with his remedial measures for Ireland. A most proper duty surely. He has put down pike-rioting, open and advised incendiary eloquence, and signified to Ireland that her wrongs are not to be redressed by street-barricades just at present; an act for which all sane men, Irish and English, applaud him. But this act done, the question rises, more naked and irrepressible than ever: By what means, then, *are* Irish wrongs to be redressed? Fifty thousand armed soldiers,—in red coats or in green, there are said to be about so many,—here is prohibition of Repeal treason, but here is no cure of the disease which produces Repeal treason, and other madnesses and treasons among us. Here is still no indication how the Irish population is to begin endeavouring to live on just terms with one another

* From the *Spectator*, May 13, 1848.

and with us,—or, alas, even how it is to continue living at all.

Of a truth, remedial measures are very needful: for Ireland's sake, and indeed for Britain's, which is indissolubly chained to her, and is drifting along with her and by reason of her, close in the rear of her, towards unspeakable destinies otherwise. Our copartnery being indissoluble, and the "Warner operation" lately spoken of* impossible, it is to ourselves also of the last importance that the depths of Irish wretchedness be actually sounded: that we get to the real bottom of that unspeakable cloaca, and endeavour, by Heaven's blessing, with all the strength that is in us, to commence operations upon it. Purified that hideous mass must be, or we ourselves cannot live! More stringent than O'Connell eloquence, or O'Brien pike-manufacture, the law of Nature itself makes us now, in every fibre, participant of Ireland's wretchedness. Steam-passage from Ireland is occasionally as low as fourpence a head. Not a wandering Irish lackall that comes over to us, to parade his rags and hunger, and sin and misery, but comes in all senses as an irrepressible missionary of the like to our own people; an inarticulate prophet of God's justice to nations; heralding to us also a doom like his own. Of our miseries and fearful entanglements here in Britain, he, the Irish lackall, is by far the heaviest; and we cannot shake him off. No, we have deserved him: by our incompetence and unveracity—by our cowardly, false, and altogether criminal neglect of Ireland—by our government of make-believe and not of

* *Examiner*: April 29, 1848, § Repeal of the Union (*vide supra*, p. 375).

truth and reality, so long continued there, we have deserved him; and suddenly, by the aid of steam and modern progress of the sciences, we have got him. The irrepressible missionary and God's messenger to us, I say, is this one, he! A strange sight, and one that gives rise to thoughts:—"the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." He comes to us to revenge his country; and he does revenge it. The mad cry of Repeal you can put down—change into another as mad, or less, or still more mad; but him you can cannot put down.

For Britain's sake itself, if Britain is to continue habitable much longer, Ireland must actually attain remedial measures,—and of a kind we have not been much used to, for two centuries back, in this country. We have been a little idle, in respect of Irish remedial measures, for two centuries back! In fact, ever since Oliver Cromwell's time, we have done little but grimace and make-believe, and *sham* a kind of governing there; attaching ourselves to any entity or sham that would help us along from year to year; imagining (miserable criminals that we have been!) that falsities and injustices, well varnished, would do instead of facts and continuous performance according to the eternal laws,—if not a God had made Ireland and us, but a Devil, who could quote Scripture on occasion! And now it has all come down upon us; and we welter among it, on the edge of huge perils: and we must alter it, or prepare to perish. Surely, if ever for any country in the world, remedial measures are needed for Ireland now!

The remedial measures propounded, or to be propounded for Ireland, by the British chief governor, in this crisis,

are,—what does the reader think?—*first*, a bill for improved Registration of Irish County Voters; *secondly*, a bill for improved ditto in Irish Municipalities; and—and nothing else at all for the present; these for the present *are* the remedial measures contemplated by the British chief governor, on behalf of Ireland.

How it may pass in Parliament, this first attempt at discharge of governor's duty and debt towards subjects dying for want of governing, we do not know; but certainly out of Parliament, the attempt does seem almost surprising. Rather a lean instalment, you would say, of the big debt due; probably among the leanest instalments towards so enormous a liquidation ever offered by any son of Adam! Extension of the electoral suffrage,—good Heavens, what will that do for a country which labours under the frightfullest immediate want of potatoes? Potatoes, possibility of work that will procure potatoes, or a substitute for that sad root, and enable the electors to sustain themselves alive: there lies the awful prime necessity for Ireland just now. Towards that goal first of all, and not as yet toward any other, does Ireland, from the depths of its being, struggle and endeavour. Extension of the suffrage? Could the chief governor, in his beneficence, extend the suffrage through municipalities and counties, through villages and parishes, so that not only all the men of Ireland, but all the women and children, and even all the oxen and asses and dogs of Ireland, should be asked their vote, and taught to give it with the exactest authenticity, and the last finish of constitutional perfection,—of what avail would all that be? Not that course, I should say, leads towards work and potatoes; but rather it

leads directly away from it. Not by extending the electoral or other suffrage, but by immensely curtailing it (were the good *method* once found), could a constitutional benefit be done, there or here! Not who votes, but who or what is voted for, what is decided on: that is the important question! Constitutional men are by no means aware of it yet; but the real truth, in a private way, is, that no fool's vote, no knave's, no liar's, no gluttonous greedy-minded cowardly persons (rich or poor) in a word, no *slave's* vote, is other than a nuisance, and even the chief of nuisances in its kind, be given where, when, or in what manner it like! That is the everlasting fact of the matter; true to-day as it was at the beginning of the world,—and only overlooked (for reasons) in certain confused heavy-laden periods, which by their nature are either fatal or else transitory. Constitutional men, I believe, will gradually become aware of this; and once well discerning it, will find a whole unelaborated world of practical reform, on that unexpected side, of *curtailing* the suffrage again!

In brief, his Lordship's bill for improved Registration of Irish County Voters, which is said to be good of its sort, and bill for improved ditto in Irish Municipalities, which has not yet come into the light, do, to impartial extra-parliamentary persons, seems as strange a pair of bills as ever were propounded on such an occasion. Our impious Irish *Tower of Babel*, built high for centuries now, against God's commandment, having at last, with fatal shudder through every stone of it, cracked from top to base; and bending now visibly to every eye, and hanging in momentary peril of tumbling wholly, and of carrying our own

dwelling-place along with it,—will his Lordship, with these two exquisite Whitechapel needles, bring the imminent bulging masonries, the big beams and deranged boulders, into square again? These, it appears, are his *first* crowbars; with these he means to begin and try!

Is his Lordship not aware, then, that the Irish potato has, practically speaking, fallen extinct; that the hideous form of Irish so-called "social existence" sustained thereby, has henceforth become impossible? That some new existence, deserving a little more to be called "social," will have to introduce itself there; or worse, and ever worse, down to some nameless worst of all, will have to follow? That, accordingly, a real *government*, come from where it can, is indispensable for the human beings that inhabit Ireland? That on the whole, real government, effective guidance and constraint of human folly by human wisdom, is very desirable for all manner of human beings? That, in fine, the King of the French drove lately through the Barrier of Passy in a one-horse chaise? And furthermore that Europe at large has risen behind him, to testify that it also will, at least, have done with sham government, and have either true government or else none at all? These are grave facts; and indicate to all creatures that a *new* and very ominous era, for Ireland and for us, has arrived.

Ireland, which was never yet organic with any other than make-believe arrangement, now writhes in bitter agony, plainly disorganic from shore to shore; its perennial hunger grown too sharp even for Irish nerves. England has her Chartisms, her justly discontented work-people countable by the million; repressed for the moment, not at

all either remedied or extinguished by the glorious 10th of April, for which a monument is to be built. No; and Europe, we say, from Cadiz to Copenhagen, has crashed together suddenly into the bottomless deeps, the thin earth-rind, wholly *artificial*, giving way beneath it; and welters now one huge Democracy, one huge Anarchy or *Kinglessness*; its "kings" all flying like a set of mere play-actor kings, and none now even pretending to rule, and heroically at his life's peril, command and constrain. Does our chief governor calculate that England, with such a Chartism under deck, and such a fire-ship of an Ireland indissolubly chained to her, beaten on continually by an anarchic Europe and its all-permeating influences and impulses, can keep the waters on those terms? By her old constitutional methods, of producing small registration bills, much Parliamentary eloquence, and getting the supplies voted,—in which latter point, it would seem now, owing to increase of Parliamentary eloquence, the chief governor finds difficulties? Is it by such alchemy that he will front the crisis? A chief governor of that humour, at the present juncture, is surely rather an alarming phenomenon!

IRISH REGIMENTS (OF THE NEW ERA).*

WILL his Lordship go along with us in the following practical reflection, and anticipation of what can be from what is; which ought to prove consolatory to governors of men, in such universal down-break as now threatens in Ireland and elsewhere? Much is possible for the governor of men; much has been possible, when he tried it with a true dead-lift effort, feeling that he *must* do it! Here, visible far off on the edge of our horizon, seems to be some actual peak or headland of the country of the Future; which is already looming vaguely in the general eye; and which, I think, the helmsman everywhere will have to take note of, and intently steer towards, before long! A small fraction of that huge business, called "Organization of Labour," which is of infinite concernment and of vital necessity to all of us,—though numerous Louis-Blancs, Owen-Fouriers, Luxembourg Commissions, and I know not what sad set of soothsayers, with their dreams of Fraternity, Equality, and universal Paradise-made-easy, throw it into some discredit for the moment. Let us look steadily, and see whether the thing is not now partly visible even to the naked eye?

The unemployed vagrant miscellaneous Irish, once dressed in proper red coats, and put under proper drill-sergeants, with strict military law above them, can be trained into soldiers; and will march to any quarter of the

* From the *Spectator*, May 13, 1848.

globe and fight fiercely, and will keep step and pas-de-charge, and subdue the enemy for you, like real soldiers,—none better, I understand, or few, in this world. Here is a thing worth noting, The Irish had always, from the first creation of them, a talent for individual fighting: but it took several thousand years of effort, before, on hest and pressure of clearest Necessity, the indispensable organic concert got introduced into the business, and they could be taught to fight in this profitable military manner. Several thousand years of faction-fights, pike-skirmishes, combustions, private duels by shillelagh, by dirk and fist, and still feller methods; and indeed it was only comparatively in the late centuries, long posterior to King Rufus and William of Ipres, that the Irish fighting talent was got regimented, and these inestimable advantages (maintenance of public order and government authority, no less) could be educed from it. And what taming and manipulation it took; how many antagonistic struggles on the part of sergeant, conqueror, legislator, pacificator, wolf-subduer, howsoever the Organizing Man was named,—long generations of multiform agonistic struggle, managed in a more or less heroic, and at last in a successful manner,—the gods and the forgotten William of Ipres alone know. But it was done, accomplished; and we see it now before us, and bless the unknown heroes and forgotten benefactors for it.

Is organization to fight, the only organization achievable by Irishmen under proper sergeants? There is the question! For example, the Irish have in all times shown, and do now show, an indisputable talent for spade-work, which, under slight modification, means all kinds of husbandry work. Men skilled in the business testify that,

with the spade, there is no defter or tougher worker than the common Irishman at present. None who will live on humbler rations, and bring a greater quantity of efficient spade-work out of him, than the vagrant, unemployed, and in fact quite chaotic Irishman of this hour. Here is a fact; really rather notable, and such as invites meditation. For, like the old fighting talent, this new delving talent, being as yet quite chaotic, brings no advantage whatever to the poor Irishman possessor of it. Here he is, willing and able to dig, as ever his ancestor was to do faction-fighting or irregular multiform duel: but him, alas, no William of Ipres, or other sternly benign drill-sergeant, has yet ranked into regiment; clothed in effectual woollen russet, or drab cotton moleskin; and bidden wisely: "Go thither, that way not this, and dig swiftly (pay and rations await thee) for that object not for this. This will profit thee and me; that will not; dig there and thus!" Alas, no; he wanders inorganic; and his fate at present, with nothing but "supply and demand" buzzing round him, and in *his* ear the inexorable doom-summons, "Thou shalt die starved for all thy digging talent," is the hardest of any creature's—and I should say, the unjustest. Is there seen on this earth at present other such fatal sight? A whole world, or nearly so, undug; a man, with the skilfullest, eagerest digging-talent, condemned to die because none will show him where to dig. There are many that have leisure, money, sense; but it is impossible, they all cry! Alas, the thrice-beneficial William of Ipres that will take up this wandering spademan and turn him to account, has not yet presented himself among us. Nay, I hear it said everywhere that *he* is flatly an inconceivability; that the old

fighting drill-sergeant, sternly benign, did prove indeed successful and unspeakably advantageous; but that the new pacific one, prayed for by some, is mere madness,—nay that there is a kind of sin, allied to blasphemy and the other unforgivable treasons against the Universe, in so much as thinking of him, or at least publicly speaking of him.

Which opinion I must here take the liberty, in my own name and that of as many as will follow me, of mildly but peremptorily and for evermore denying. Not so, my friends; I take the gods to witness that it is not so. In the name of human nature, I protest that fighting is *not* the only talent which can be regulated, regimented, and by organization and human arrangement be made, instead of hideous, beautiful, beneficent, and of indispensable advantage to us. Not the only arrangeable, commandable, captainable talent, that of fighting: I say that of digging is another, and a still better. Nay there is no human talent whatever but is capable of the like beneficent process, and calculated to profit infinitely by it. As shall be seen yet, gradually, in happier days, if it please Heaven: for the future work of human wisdom and human heroism is discernible to be even this, not of fighting with, and beating to death one's poor fellow-creatures in other countries, but of regimenting into blessed activity more and more one's poor fellow-creatures in one's own country, for their and all people's profit more and more. A field wide enough, untilled enough, God knows; and in which, I should say, human heroism, and all the divine wisdom that is among us, could not too soon, with one accord, begin! For the time presses; the years and the days, at this epoch, are

precious; teeming with either deliverance or destruction!

Yes, much is yet unready, put off till the morrow; but this, of trying to find some spade-work for the disorganic Irish and British spademan, cannot be delayed much longer. Colonels of field-labour, as well as colonels of field-fighting, doubt it not, *can* be found, if you will search for them with diligence; nay, I myself, have seen some such: colonels, captains, lieutenants, down to the very sergeants and fifers of field-labour, can be got, if you will honestly want them,—oh, in what abundance, and with what thrice-blessed results. could *they* be "supplied" if you did indeed with due intensity continue to "demand" them! And, I think, one regiment, ten regiments, of diggers, on the Bog of Allen, would look as well almost as ten regiments of shooters on the field of Waterloo; and probably ten times as well as ten war-ships riding in the Tagus, for body-guard to Donna Maria da Gloria, at this epoch of the world! Some incipiency of a real effective regimenting of spademen is actually a possibility for human creatures at this time. Possible, I say, and even easier than William of Ipres found *his* work; and it is pressingly needful withal, and indeed practically indispensable before long. Never can the mad cry of Repeal, or some cry, equally mad, cease in Ireland; never can the world cease writhing and moaning, in dull agony, in dark stifled rage, till the disorganic perishing spademan begin to get fairly in contact with his spade-work; he cannot, and he even should not, know a moment's loyal peace till then. Some regimenting of spade-work *can*, by honest life-and-death effort long continued on the part of govern-

ing men, be done; and even must be done. All Nations, and I think our own foremost, will either get a beginning made towards doing it, or die in nameless anarchies before long!

Do the governing persons of this country, does our present respectable Premier, consider that all this lies quite beyond his province; belongs to the field of private benevolence, field of private enterprise; and that he and the British Government have for their share, nothing to do with it? Him also I must humbly but positively answer, No! It is in his province withal; and, if it be essential to the ends of British society, surely it is more in his province than in any other man's. Alas, I know, or can figure in some measure, the shoreless imbroglio of red-tape and parliamentary eloquence in which he lives and has his sorrowful being:—tape-thrums heaped high above him as the Heaven, and deep below him as the Abyss; and loud inane eloquence (public-speaking transacted in the hearing of twenty-seven millions, many of whom are fools!) beating on him likewise, as a mad ocean, and every single bellow and every separate tape-thrum singing merely, "Impossible, impossible to do any real business here! Nothing but parliamentary eloquence possible here!" All this I know, or can fancy in some measure, and sorrow over. Nevertheless, all this will not excuse an unfortunate British Premier. He stands at the summit of our society; has, with his eyes open, and what real or imaginary views he knows best, taken his station there; and to him inevitably do perishing British subjects cry,—if not for help, yet for some signal that somebody, somewhere, in some manner should at least begin to try to help them!

Decidedly they do; and will, so long as there is anything called by the name of Government among us. To say, "Impossible! Good citizens, be obliging enough to perish in peace: you see I have no help!"—alas, can that answer ever, in the profoundest imbroglio of tape-thrums, and loudest parliamentary eloquence of the British Constitution, continue to be available? The perishing British subjects do not think so, nor do I. Let the British chief governor cry earnestly from the abysses and the red-tape imbroglios, whatever they may be: a Jonah was heard from the whale's belly;—and he too, unless the Heavens help him to some scheme or counsel, he and we are lost!

TREES OF LIBERTY.*

FROM MR. BRAMBLE'S UNPUBLISHED ARBORETUM HIBERNICUM.

[A FRIEND with a surly, satirical face flings in our way this banter upon "Irish indolence." Very well, friend; we shame the Devil and print your libel. *Fas et ab hoste doceri.* If there be any seeds of truth in it they will grow, when the chaff and wrappage only make manure for them.]

Many Irishmen talk of dying, &c. for Ireland; and I really believe almost every Irishman now alive longs in his way for an opportunity to do the dear old country some good. Opportunities of at once usefully and conspicuously "dying" for countries are not frequent, and truly the rarer they are the better; but the opportunity of usefully if

* From *The Nation* (Dublin), December 1, 1849.

unconspicuously living for one's country, this was never denied to any man. Before "dying" for your country, think, my friends, in how many quiet strenuous ways you might beneficially live for it.

Every patriotic Irishmen (that is, by hypothesis, almost every Irishman now alive) who would so fain make the dear old country a present of his whole life and self, why does he not, for example—directly after reading this, and choosing a feasible spot—at least, plant one tree? That were a small act of self-devotion; small, but feasible. Him such tree will never shelter. Hardly any mortal but could manage that—hardly any mortal, if he were serious in it, but could plant and nourish into growth one tree. Eight million trees before the present generation run out, that were an indubitable acquisition for Ireland: for it is one of the barest, raggedest countries now known; far too ragged a country, with patches of beautiful park and fine cultivation, like shreds of bright scarlet on a beggar's clouted coat—a country that stands decidedly in need of shelter, shade, and ornamental fringing, look at its landscape where you will. Once, as the old chroniclers write, "a squirrel (by bending its course a little, and taking a longish leap here and there) could have run from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway without once touching the ground"; but now, eight million trees, and I rather conjecture eight times eight million, would be very welcome in that part of the empire. On fruit-trees, though these too are possible enough, I do not yet insist, but trees—at least, trees.

That eight million persons will be persuaded to plant each his tree, we cannot expect just yet; but do thou, my

friend, in silence go and plant thine—that thou canst do; one most small duty, but a real one, if among the smallest conceivable, and a duty which henceforth it will be a sweet possession for thee to have lying *done*. Ireland for the present is not to be accounted a pleasant landscape. Vigorous corn, but thistles and docks equally vigorous; ulcers of reclaimable bog lying black, miry and abominable at intervals of a few miles; no tree shading you, nor fence that avails to turn cattle—most fences merely, as it were, soliciting the cattle to be so good as not come through—by no means a beautiful country just now! But it tells all men how beautiful it might be. Alas, it carries on it, as the surface of this earth ever does ineffaceably legible, the physiognomy of the people that have inhabited it: a people of holed breeches, dirty faces, ill-roofed huts—a people of impetuosity and of levity—of vehemence, impatience, imperfect, fitful industry, imperfect, fitful *veracity*. Oh Heaven! there lies the woe of woes, which is the root of all.

"Trees of Liberty," though an Abbé wrote a book on them, and incalculable trouble otherwise was taken, have not succeeded well in these ages. Plant you your eight million trees of shade, shelter, ornament, fruit: that is a symbol much more likely to be prophetic. Each man's tree of industry will be, of a surety, *his* tree of liberty; and the sum of them, never doubt of it, will be Ireland's.

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